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Neighbor to the Sky

by GLADYS HASTY CARROLL

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by S. de MADARIAGA

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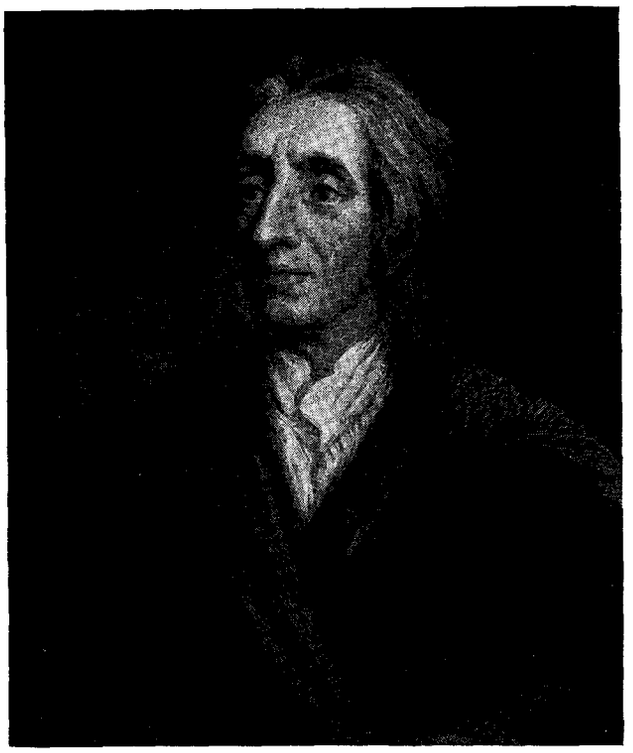
John Locke

BY LLEWELYN POWYS

ON the island of Capri not far from the Piccola Marina there is an almost inaccessible cave that was once used by Tiberius for a boathouse. The floor of this cave is thickly covered over with sand which if allowed to run carefully through the fingers exposes morsels of the mosaic with which the Roman Emperor two thousand years ago embellished the cave's roof. I have spent many hours searching for these bright chips and still treasure nearly fifty of them.

On one occasion when I was so employed my solitude was disturbed by the figure of a stranger darkening the cave's mouth. He was a German professor. During the conversation that ensued he remarked that there was no greater English thinker than John Locke, asserting that this seventeenth century philosopher from Somerset had had a deep and lasting influence on the metaphysical thought of Europe, well meriting the honor of being the "evil genius" of the rationalism of the eighteenth century.



JOHN LOCKE
From the portrait by Kneller.

Locke was born six years after the death of Bacon and three months before the birth of Spinoza. His accidental birth at the house of a relation at Wrington was duly recorded in the register of the beautiful parish church of "that praty market townlet," "1632 John the son of John Lock."

From the first the philosopher's championship of broad conclusions was obnoxious to all who favored unexamined traditions, and it has been objectionable ever since to those who look for our betterment from obedience to blind custom. Anthony à Wood, who was Locke's contemporary at Oxford, did not scruple to leave behind him this crabbed word: "John Locke of Christ Church, now a noted writer, was a man of turbulent spirit clamorous and discontented. When the rest of our Club took notes deferentially from the mouth of the Master, the said Locke scorned to do so, but was ever prating and troublesome." Nothing but the grossest political bias could possibly account for such a commentary. It is clear as day that, both in his writings and in his life, John Locke was very especially distinguished for his tolerance. At the University he was as friendly with Kingsmen as with Roundheads, with Boyle as with his "fanatical tutor," John Owen. As a member of the Royal Society he was acquainted with eminent persons of every opinion and party, and in his last happy retirement at the house of Sir Francis Masham at Oates, in Essex, he would entertain Sir Isaac Newton, Anthony Collins, the free-thinking young squire, and visiting High Churchmen, with an urbanity equally smooth. Atheists alone, of all men, he seems to have been careful to keep outside the pale of his plenary indulgence, declaring with emphatic asperity that "the taking away of God dissolves all," and that for this reason social obligations could have no possible hold upon gentlemen of so blunt a persuasion.

Even the authorities of Oxford, with whom Locke had spent so many happy years, eventually turned against him, his celebrated thirty-pound essay so offending their "vermiculate" schoolmen's learning, that they placed it on their index, forbidding the Heads of the Colleges to allow it to be even so much as read to the undergraduates in their charge, an affront which Locke himself made light of, merely observing, "I take what has been done as a recommendation of the book to the world." It is true enough that the "Essay Concerning Human Understanding" has never lacked its defenders. Voltaire said of it, "Many have written the romance of the mind; a sage has modestly written its history."

We may assume that John Locke's academic unpopularity rests largely upon his famous contention that nothing ever enters our minds that was not first introduced by one or other of our five senses. "I see no reason, therefore, to believe that the soul thinks before the senses have furnished it with ideas to think on." Continuing to follow out his argument the philosopher concludes that "all those sublime thoughts which tower above the clouds and reach as high as heaven itself, take their rise and footing here. . . . In all that great extent wherein the mind wanders . . . it stirs not one jot beyond those ideas which sense or reflection have offered for its contemplation." How far we, notwithstanding "all that is boasted of innate perception," are in knowledge and intellectual features "above the condition of a cockle or an oyster" he leaves to be considered. Any investigation of Locke's writings ought to reassure conventional people that the practical philosopher was by no means pulling up the foundations of knowledge but rather laying "those foundations surer." He asserts, for example, that the certainty of the existence of God is equal to a mathematical certainty, contenting himself with re-

Next Week

T. E. LAWRENCE BY HIS FRIENDS
Edited by A. W. LAWRENCE
Reviewed by Selden Rodman

ORCHIDS ON YOUR BUDGET
By MARJORIE HILLIS
Reviewed by Agnes Rogers

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marking that it is a proposition that demands for its solution "careful attention."

My own disagreement with Locke is on very different grounds. Though his writings on education contain much sound advice, as, for example, that every child whatever his station should learn a manual trade "if practicable two or three but one more particularly," they also include a passage lamentably revelatory of the limitations of the old match-making bachelor. The treacherous sentences to which I refer discover Doctor Locke as being indifferent to the true secret of life, to a sure golden clue in its entangled labyrinth!

> If a child have a poetic vein, it is to me the strangest thing in the world, that the father should desire or suffer it to be cherished or improved. Methinks the parents should labor to have it stifled or suppressed as much as may be . . . for it is very seldom seen that anyone discovers mines of gold or silver on Parnassus. It is a pleasant air, but a barren soil; and there are very few instances of those who have added to their patrimony by anything they have reaped from thence.

Nothing is easier than through too much worldly wisdom to miss all. Small advantage it is to a bat to clutch at a rafter when the building totters; far better to fly free, snatching at a scant diet in marginal twilights. John Locke throughout the course of his seventy-two years never lost sight of his "hair portmanteau" and little "red" portfolio full to the brim with business papers hidden away in some death-watch-beetle-cupboard down at Beluton in Somerset. He bestowed the same cautious care upon each undertaking of his stately days. He saw to it, for instance, that his annuity purchased from the first Lord Shaftesbury was well secured by the solid acres of one of the best of the farms on the Wimbourne St. Giles estate. The lean, lantern-jawed countenance presented to us in his latter portraits is therefore not altogether to be relied upon in its suggestion of ascetic unworldliness. He was a Jack that was feign to eat his cake and to have it as well. "John Locke lives a very cunning, unintelligible life here," writes an Oxford acquaintance. "Certainly there is some Whigg intrigue a-managing; but not a word of politics comes from him." Locke's very last utterance as he lay on his death bed, his creature wants so tenderly cared for by Lady Masham and her stepdaughter Esther, seems still inspired by considerations of a comprehensive prudence. He was dying, he said, "in sincere communion with the church of Christ, by whatever names Christ's followers call themselves."

When I was a boy the late Lord Strachey was the popular Parliamentman for South Somerset. This distinguished Liberal peer was associated in our childish minds with riot and revolution. Mr. Strachey regularly won at the polls, and the Conservative failure would be as regularly commemorated by a faint sound of cheering that would come wafting across the West Drive to the Vicarage garden as Mr. Imberterry or Mr. Peake Mason took a formal departure from his Montacute House supporters. One of Locke's closest friends was a John Strachey, the first of that family to come into possession of Sutton Court at Chew Magna. His letters to this childhood friend are amongst the most lively that he ever addressed. He wrote to him from Paris inquiring how he could possibly expect to learn anything of the fashionable world of Paris "by living at Sutton Court and eating crammed capons and apple pies?" Locke could also pass off one of those labored, indelicate pleasantries so dear to the eighteenth century with Mary Jepp, Strachey's stepsister, whose marriage with his diligent correspondent, Edward Clarke of Chipley, he himself had arranged. She was apparently a great favorite with the precise old bachelor; indeed it would seem sometimes that the young lady "whom methinks looks prettily for a mother" was almost in as high a place of esteem as Damaris Cudworth (afterwards Lady Masham), the gifted daughter of the Cambridge neo-Platonist, Ralph Cudworth, a native of Aller in Somerset. "If your lying in," he writes to the young wife, "will, as you say, produce long letters as certainly as I find it does fine children, I advise for my own sake as well as that of your family, that Master and you would get to work again as hard as you can drive, that you might lie in again as soon as may be." His letter to his Quaker friend of Rotterdam also goes to show that the society of prominent people he had been accustomed to meet at Exeter House had never succeeded in entirely seducing him from those more sober tastes becoming to a philosopher.

> Do not think I am grown either Stoic or a mystic. I can laugh as heartily as ever. . . . You may easily conclude this writer in a chimney corner in some obscure hole. . . . I live in fear of the bustlers, and would not have them come near me.

In our present turbulent epoch it would be impossible for our politicians to study Locke's Essays "written by incoherent parcels" with too much assiduity. He had been early taught the value of compromise. "I no sooner perceived myself in the world, but I found myself in a storm that has lasted hitherto."

His "incoherent expression of sensuous empiricism" was peculiarly native to our English genius of illogical adjustments, clearly encouraging our bent for the practical application of Montaigne's judgment that the "For and the Against are both possible." Locke regarded nothing as being more dangerous to the health of any Commonwealth than the spirit of fanaticism rooted in some faultless speculative theory. He was a pragmatic opportunist who recognized that all human cogitation is fallible and that always there remains at the bottom of life's problems a residue of "irreducible and stubborn facts." "God," Locke declared once, "has not been so sparing to men as to have made them barely two-legged creatures, and left it to Aristotle to make them rational." He distrusts the claims of intuition even more than those of subtle syllogisms. "It is no small power to give one man over another to have authority to make a man swallow that for an innate principle which may serve his purpose who teacheth them." The conclusion of the whole matter is that we are fully justified in putting our confidence in the rulings of ordinary good-natured common-sense. We have no safer nor no surer way. It is indeed a paramount

(*Continued on page* 12)

The Two Triumphs

BY LYTTON STRACHEY

'TIS true that I have never touched your hair;
Perhaps, indeed, 'tis not for me to touch.
He touches it; but then he does not care.
I touch it not; but then I care so much.
In this wrong world was it not always so
Since Adam plucked our deep-desired woe?

Why do you let him love you? Why not me?
Am I less worthy? Ah! That I am more
Is why I still must lose you, and why he
May taste the sweet fruit to the bitter core.
So from great Moses was the promised ground
Exhibited, which little Joshua found.

Yet listen; you are mine in his despite.
Who shall dare say his triumph mine prevents?
My love is the established infinite,
And all his kisses are but accidents.
His earth, his heaven, shall wither and decay
To naught: my love shall never pass away.

For, as in mummied sepulchre unseen
The planted grass Osiris' name expressed,
So shall my love's dim seed with living green
Inform at last your mortuary breast:
And in your sealed-up heart there shall be read
The mystic resurrection of the dead.

This hitherto unpublished poem was recently released by Lytton Strachey's literary executor.

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A NORWEGIAN TOWN
Woodcut by H. Glintenkamp, from "A Wanderer in Woodcuts."

Norwegians in the Sun

NORTHERN SUMMER. By Gosta af Geijerstam. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1937. $1.50.

Reviewed by AGNES ROTHERY

THIS is the cheerfullest and the sunniest book which has come out of Norway in a long time. As simple and palatable as bread and clabber is this brief record of a Norwegian father, mother, and five youngsters who move out from their winter home on the mainland to spend their summer holiday on an island farm, accompanied in the motor boat by "a cow which we had just bought, a squealing pig in a sack, and a yowling cat in another."

The fields and the fjords: sunlight and gulls: the pig and the kitten who are inseparable friends: mother learning to milk and father to scythe and the little boys to fish—it is all here in a hundred and twenty pages.

There is nothing precocious about the children. They are sweet sometimes and a nuisance sometimes and sometimes they are quite funny, particularly Pelle who "had the habit of sinking into an imaginary world of his own and becoming lost to the actual world around him. . . . Once when Papa had called him several times without getting an answer, Pelle had finally said, in great irritation: 'Be still, Papa! Can't you see I am sitting here falling to pieces?'"

The family all make hay together; they bathe together with great shouting. They follow the lives of the various animals on the farm with absorbed attention. One boy has a birthday. Father tells fairy stories. It is the simplest tale—simply told but drenched with humor that does not strain and sentiment that does not cloy.

"Northern Summer" is such a small book that one fears it may become lost behind bigger volumes, and the tone is so unpretentious one fears it may be drowned by more strident voices. This would be a pity for it is, in its modest way, quite a little gem.

A Son of the United States

AMERICAN DREAM: A NOVEL. By Michael Foster. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1937. $3.

Reviewed by HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

MR. FOSTER'S novel may be called an American story-of-the-generations book told in a series of lengthy cut-backs from the base line of the latest generation of the Thralls. At the opening of the story Shelby Thrall, sick of the clatter and hypocrisy of newspaper work, has resolved to chuck it for a printing venture of his own; when he is cleaning out his house in San Francisco, preparatory to moving, certain old letters come under his view, and his speculation as to what manner of persons his ancestors were is the excuse for the successive returns to previous generations of Thralls. The device is not new, but the manner of treating the glimpses one is vouchsafed of past generations has the speed, the acrid strength of the present mode in fiction. The title of the book signifies that the Thralls, ever pushing westward and ever dissatisfied, have pursued the American dream of a better life somewhere, somehow to be found.

Whether this manner of telling the story is the right one may be debated, but the successive episodes are presented with a sense of drama and power which makes Mr. Foster a novelist worth reckoning with. The defeat of generations of idealists might be monotonous, were it not that the author has wonderfully vivified his historic episodes. The story of the first Thrall who crosses from Ireland, single-handed quells a riot among the immigrants, tries vainly to settle down in respectable Boston, and finally takes to the sea again, a queer little romantic woman having hidden herself as a stowaway on his ship, is absorbing narrative, and quite as vivid is a fragment of Indian fighting which appears later in the tale. Somehow, as the book approaches the years of the World War it seems to lose validity. The Thralls make some odd marriages, and the gallery of female portraits in the book, some successful and some not, are possibly the most debatable matter in the novel.

But one reads "American Dream," not, as is too often the case with that harmless, necessary drudge, the book-reviewer, from a sense of duty, but because the novel moves. With all its faults, it has life, color, interest, and meaning. Not only are the episodes in the main well worth reading, but the implications of the theme have moment. The book really illuminates the significance of human life in the United States.

In the Delta Country

SON OF HAMAN. By Louis Cochran. Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by LUCIA B. MIRRIELEES

THE Caxton Printers have launched upon a trilogy, and again the life of a crude country boy fills the first volume. But unlike the neurotic hero of Vardis Fisher's much disputed tetralogy, also a Caxton publication, Mr. Cochran presents in the post-Civil War years, when Freud was unknown, a hard-headed, stalwart, illegitimate youth of the delta lands in Mississippi, Lije Smith, who is possessed of purely practical desires. He boasts of these when he has drunk too much: he means to own timber, amass wealth, and marry 'Lisbeth, the well-to-do daughter of the only "quality folks" in this community of poor share-croppers.

Mr. Cochran, Mississippi lawyer and G-Man, known for his magazine articles on Southern politicians better, perhaps, than for his first two novels, seems to be thoroughly familiar with the life of which he writes. He, too, like Lije's rival in love, hung up his shingle and practised law on the Yazoo River, where, at least in the 1880's, the community preferred swift justice by personal encounter to the law.

Mr. Cochran tells the story of "The Son of Haman" in simple, sometimes awkwardly simple, style. Occasionally the reiteration of the lunch pail contents recalls the overconscientious report of a social worker, but to one bred on frontier tales, whether of Mississippi delta lands or Western prairie, much of the book rings true. The drinking, fighting, heavy joking of the men, the proximity but intangible distance between "good" and "bad" women, the distrust of city men, the "shotgun wedding" at the end all bear the authentic stamp of frontier life. Showboat, country dance, religious revival, work in the cotton field and at the gin provide a picturesque setting for the ambitious Lije. Least convincing are the "quality folks"; most colorful is the revival conducted beneath flaming torches by Brother Raccoon Watkins, kin to all the Billy Sundays of a later day.

This first volume of the trilogy from the Caxton Printers, far less beautifully written and far less provocative of thought than Mr. Fisher's first volume, presents, in a rapidly moving tale, several convincing characters, Lije among them, shown against the comparatively unknown background of the Mississippi delta country.

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A Liberal View of the Nazis

THE THIRD REICH. By Henri Lichtenberger. New York: The Greystone Press. 1937. $3.

Reviewed by RAYMOND J. SONTAG

ONE depressing effect of Nazi intolerance has been its capacity to generate intolerance among liberals. It is a relief, therefore, to be able to say that liberal scholarship has at last been vindicated by the production of a temperate, judicious analysis of the Third Reich. "It is hard for me to believe," M. Lichtenberger confesses, "that Germany has suddenly become a land of barbarians. I feel, as do a great many of those who have had the occasion to observe the situation at close range, that the 'eternal' Germany still lives under the brown shirt of Hitlerism as it did under the tinsel of the era of Wilhelm." With that conviction steadily in mind he examines the record of the last four years. He finds much to praise.

In 1932 the German people were sick with worry and discouragement; in 1937 they are full of confidence. In 1932 unemployment had reached staggering proportions, while industry and agriculture were paralyzed; in 1937 unemployment has practically vanished, while industry and agriculture are working to capacity. In 1932 Germany was bound by the Treaty of Versailles; in 1937 the treaty is dead, and Germany has an army which commands fear and respect. If German finance is shaky today, it was shaky when the Nazis took power, and in the interval an army has been created. Many Germans are hungry, but that is not new, and the people are being trained to Spartan endurance. Outside Germany, many doubt if Spartan discipline is really effective. "I do not pretend to have an answer to these doubts. I can only confine myself to saying that the stranger who returns from Germany, after seeing the meetings of the youth, visiting the labor camps or attending the grand public demonstrations such as the party congresses at Nuremberg, carries away the strong impression that German life has been vitalized." As a Frenchman, M. Lichtenberger is not blind to the danger which these changes hold for his country. "The balance of power has definitely broken to our disadvantage. This, too, in face of a nation which has always worshipped the cult of might and which had nothing but scorn for the weak." But Germans cannot be expected to regret the altered balance of power.

Race, in his opinion, is the secret of the changes in Germany. Fanatical devotion to the cult of race not only explains the credit side of the ledger, but also the debit. Coolly, without a trace of passion, he analyzes the Jewish and religious problem as the Nazis see these problems. Only at the close does he state his own verdict: the racial theories are not new or difficult to understand, but the calculated violence with which they are applied is difficult for Frenchmen to understand.

> They feel unresponsive to a country which submits in silence, without protest, and without revolt, to the treatment which the Nazis inflict upon their vanquished enemies, and they gaze with astonishment and hardly with sympathy upon the blustering clamor with which the victors celebrate their triumph.

What of the future? M. Lichtenberger thinks the Nazis are fully conscious of the hazards which war entails; peace depends largely on the moderation and steadiness of other countries and particularly France. He thinks economic collapse unlikely in the near future. The religious issue is bound to create a dangerous ferment; Christianity and the cult of race cannot find a basis for compromise. But far more important is the old feud of capital and labor. National Socialism is a strange combination of revolutionary radicalism and social conservatism which temporarily has captivated almost the whole nation. So far Hitler has been able to hold the balance between the two elements, but it is a balance which cannot last. In the end he must move to right or left, and then racial solidarity will lose its power to make all Germans members of a harmonious family.

No two students would agree on either the present or the future of Germany. M. Lichtenberger's modesty disarms criticism, and his judgment compels admiration. Admirable also are Mr. Pinson's translation, notes, and appendices of documents.

Raymond J. Sontag is professor of history at Princeton.

"KAMERADSCHAFT"

Flower of Indignation

EARTHLY DISCOURSE. By Charles Erskine Scott Wood. New York: The Vanguard Press. 1937. $2.

Reviewed by LEONARD BACON

COLONEL Charles Erskine Scott Wood is one of the good Americans. They are not so numerous that we can afford to undervalue them, and God forbid that this reviewer should do so.

Colonel Wood never did a mean thing in his life. And he has been consistently on the side of the angels ever since he began writing more than half a century ago. He hates and loves as he ought and he speaks up loud and clear. Why then in spite of vigor and sincerity should his book seem academic and remote from bitter actualities? It is hard to render a reason. But I suppose that the ineffectiveness of most liberal writing is due to an unspoken assumption that we are all very nice people who would make a beautiful world, were it not for Hearst and Hitler and the Archbishop of Canterbury and Mussolini and opponents of birth-control and the American Legion. One attacks such individuals and groups. One displays their inconsistency, their dishonesty, their cruelty. And in what respect is the situation altered? The wicked remain as they were. And the liberal sits looking slightly foolish as the petals drop from his fine flower of indignation.

This I think is the defect of Colonel Wood's book. There is spirit and verve in it, and one admires the vital nature of the author, however unconvinced by his argument one may be. But one remembers the aphorism (William James's, I fancy) that there is nothing sadder than an idealistic voice crying vainly in a pragmatic wilderness.

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United They Stand

THE ENGLISH COÖPERATIVES. By Sydney R. Elliott. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1937. $3.

Reviewed by MARQUIS CHILDS

HERE is the story of coöperative big business told by a coöperator who is also a skilled journalist. This account of what is far and away the most important consumers' movement in the world today is absorbing throughout, particularly as it is unfolded against the background of Britain's present-day trend toward cartelization and all the devices of monopoly control.

Mr. Elliott gives a convincing picture of the coöperative movement as a St. George single-handed and alone resisting the encroachments of the great trusts and combines that dominate British trade. Cartelization has taken place so gradually in Great Britain that we are unaware in this country of the extent to which it has gone. It has not been a spectacular growth as in our own NRA when industry united with government to fix prices.

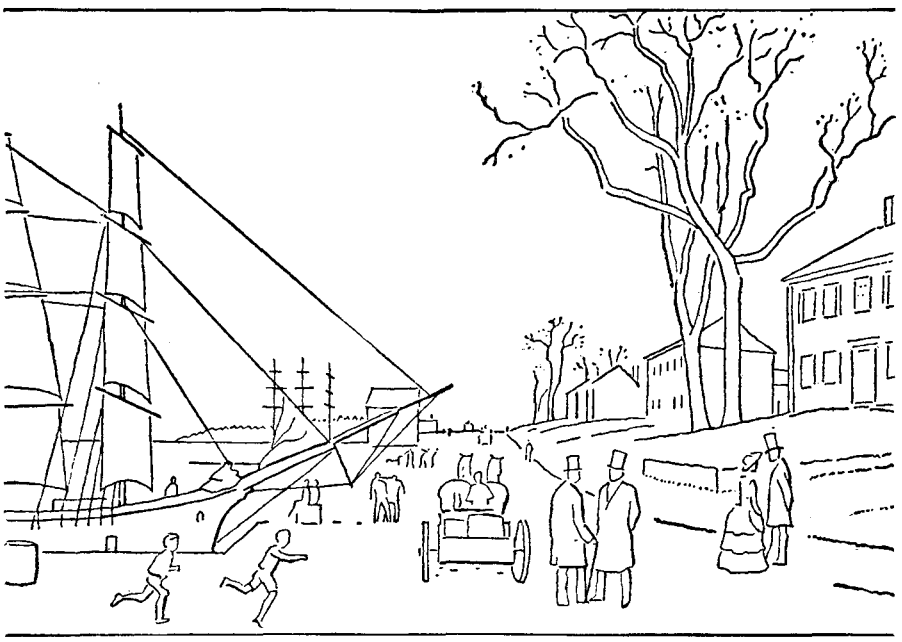
For that very reason perhaps it has been far more pervasive. And British experience, Mr. Elliott makes clear, confirms what we have learned in America during the past five years: that commissions, investigations, and laws are powerless to stop the growth of trusts. But the Coöperative Movement, with its 7,500,000 members, its thousands of retail stores, its great wholesale depots, factories, and warehouses, its banking and insurance departments, has had a considerable effect on the retail price level, lowering costs of a number of commodities.

Because the great trade combines succeeded in obtaining laws intended to tax away coöperative reserves, British cooperators have been forced to go into politics. There is a more or less loose alliance between the Coöperative Party and the Labor Party, and Mr. Elliott believes that the coöperative philosophy of production for use, quite apart from "visionary socialism," will have a larger influence upon labor in the future.

Certain hostile critics of the coöperative movement in this country have recently declared that coöperation is without the power, or even the incentive, to improve the quality of consumers' goods. Mr. Elliott shows that the coöperatives in Britain have consistently sought to raise the level of the products they sell under their own name. It seems highly unreasonable, not to say illogical, to expect them to have achieved perfection overnight.

He has watched the rise of a consumers' movement such as no one would have imagined possible forty years ago, and that is reason for a little hope.

Marquis Childs is author of "Sweden, the Middle Way," a study of the coöperative system.



DRAWING BY MAITLAND DE GOGORZA: *From "Kennebec."*

As the Kennebec Goes

KENNEBEC: CRADLE OF AMERICANS. By Robert P. Tristram Coffin. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by KENNETH P. KEMPTON

HERE is a lusty braggart of a book. Superlative and hyperbole chase heels through its pages. Maine is the best state in the Union, the Kennebec valley is the best of Maine, so the author's farm on Merrymeeting Bay is the finest in all Christendom. Maine winds are strongest, her trees were eighty-footers, her men the ruggedest and her women most prolific; and the snow is always six feet deep on the level. Ships built on the Kennebec went forth "to whiten all the world with their sails." Maine winters are cold enough to "freeze the whiskers [sic] off a brass monkey."

Now to those who know them, Maine and the Kennebec can stand superlatives. But others may be a trifle dashed by the unutterable loveliness of, say, Kennebec fog—that "long parade of beauty half a mile high." And the blue water described so temptingly may seem a little cold. The trouble with tall talk about Maine is that when you come to the sad ends of wooden ships and the ice and lumber trades, the anticlimax is terrific but there's nothing more to say. The only real lack in this book is restraint. An academic argument, perhaps? But if you are looking for characteristic Maine qualities, what about serenity and the trick of understatement? A good many people down there are "just mod'rate." A classic quality that the author forgot.

Once allowance is made for Mr. Coffin's exuberance, however, the book is good reading. It is informative without being dull, and almost unfailingly interesting without being facetious or merely sensational. And a great deal of information is packed in here. The author begins with a bird's-eye view of the river itself and a man's sense of Kennebec weather. He goes back to the Stone Age and the Oyster Shell Age, then, and brings us up through the Abenakis, the first Europeans, the six Indian wars, Arnold's disastrous march, the *Enterprise* and *Boxer* fight in 1813, and on past heroic nineteenth-century commerce and industry to the quiet river of today. Shrewdly throughout he interspersses the dead past with the lively present in the person of Cap'n Cy Bibber, lobsterman, anatomist, and philosopher at large. He writes history so racily that it sounds like a story, and a new one at that. His language is pungent with the salt of Maine speech.

Many parts of the book are memorable. I like the picture of farm dogs and cattle painfully alert for Indians. On the subject of food Mr. Coffin is irresistible: Aaron Burr's feast of bear meat on Swan Island, a chapter called "Good Eating Begins in Maine," and a passage on native cookery from skates' fins to pie will make your mouth water. But I like best a chapter called "Folk on the Farm" that shows the amphibious nature of Maine-coast people. "You have to back an eelspear out through the mowing machine wheels before you can start haying. The bagged Baldwins in the shed are mixed in with the split and dried hake. . . . The cow's milk in September may taste of tar, because she's been grazing where the seine was spread out after going through the tar kettle." That gets them where they live, and no nonsense.

Kenneth P. Kempton is the author of "Old Man Greenlaw."

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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Opportunities

For a Prophet. The reawakening of interest in the Civil War among our novelists is only part of a wider revival. The amateur of military history is emboldened to publish his ideas about the last great war which was open enough to make strategy important and the first one in which tactics were determined by the defensive power of modern armament. The sociologist has at last begun to inquire into the patterns of American feeling and behavior during wartime, their relationship to our institutions, and their part in our present organization. The economist at last shows some impatience with the long-established assumption that his job was merely to contrast a plantation economy with an industrial one. The historian, who for a generation has been more interested in Reconstruction than in the House Divided, is beginning to take the back train in an effort to understand the implications of any divided house. Editorial writers bring to bear on current questions ideas (alas, usually mistaken ones) derived from the one disharmony in the American system and the one conflict between American classes that actually produced revolution. Even in the colleges an interest in the Civil War is now respectable, and rumor says that our literary Marxists approach the same respectability.

Which is all excellent. But the tendency has got to develop further. Nothing else in our past has so much to teach this generation as the cataclysm which was produced by an unresolved paradox in the national life and which, in resolving the paradox, determined which way the national life was to go. And this generation does not know what to think about the Civil War. Its information is faulty and its deductions are bad. The ideas it expresses are professional clichés, dialectical simplicities, or findings of an earlier generation based on an insufficient investigation made with too meager tools. Just the other day, for instance, Miss Dorothy Thompson declared, on the way to another generalization, that the Civil War was, in process and in fact, the transformation of mercantile capitalism into industrial capitalism, and it was nothing more. Miss Thompson might try, on the basis of that analysis, to explain why the Middle West fought on the side of the old Northeast. She would come out a long way from where she started and at a startling angle to her original position. It is a pretty question to ask anyone who approaches the Civil War with any formula about the transformation of capitalism, and if you then require the manipulator of formulas to bring this one to bear on that other idea of these days, that the Civil War was an unnecessary tragedy for which a half-dozen personal devils were to blame, you will produce schizophrenia in him.

The whole history of the War must be rewritten, on a broader base, with the use of all instruments now at the disposal of the student. The job offers many opportunities to many minds. But an additional opportunity is this: to form, by means of the known behavior of the Americans during that time, some judgments about how they will behave in the future crisis which hypothesis says they have got to face. This is no great task for Marxists, who have only to get out the gospel and the slide rule, but it will be hard going for the kind of prophet who prefers data to divination. The results, however, will be worth the effort—and they may throw some unexpected light on both the hypothesis and the crisis.

For a Sociologist. Only a kind of sociologist whom natural selection has so far neglected to develop should undertake that job, but within the limits of sociology as now practised, even within the limits of literary sociology, there is a magnificent opportunity. There is still no general study of social experimentation in the United States, there is no general study of Utopian communities in the United States, and in particular there is no general study of the religious and economic communities which were such a striking development in American life during the first half of the last century. Half a dozen superficial histories, none of them better than Noyes's and Nordhoff's, which were published sixty-odd years ago, as many fallacious literary studies, a handful of specialized treatises on minute aspects of the movement—and no more.

The editor of this magazine recently devoted sixty pages to describing the rich vein which Mormonism offers the prospector, and Mormonism probably is the finest opportunity as well as the one that can be worked most easily. But there is no adequate treatment of either Owenism or Fourierism, there is no comprehensive study of the Oneida Community, there is not even a good history of Brook Farm. There is no history at all of the Shakers, who would probably reward study more than any other sect except the Mormons. There is no satisfactory account of the lesser experiments, no survey of the contributions to factory management and horticulture and the handicrafts made by these groups, no analysis of their ideas and the relationship of their ideas to what we think of as the main body of American thought, no idea to determine where and how the experiments issued from American society. All of these lacks suggest opportunities for qualified investigators—and indicate that the most immediate opportunity is a pioneering work, a first approximation, on the phenomenon as a whole.

For a Novelist. What one misses most in the fiction of the day is the novel of personal relationships devoted to men and women as you and I know them. Or let us say, more simply, the realistic novel about the middle class. Some day a bright young man or woman is going to write a long and expert novel about people as people, not as items in the decline of the West or decimal points in some dogma. It will deal as justly with what you and I consider their virtues as it does with what the novelist considers their shortcomings. It will understand that there is human emotion in trying to pay one's debts and educating the children and behaving with reasonable decency—and that this emotion is quite as good material for fiction as the novelist's own feeling that not to like Sibelius is plain proof of vulgarity, that not to abandon all and serve on a picket line is bourgeois cowardice, and that people are pretty helpless anyway. It will have no theory except the very startling one that a person's experience means quite a bit to him and that he isn't therefore absurd. It will enable quite a lot of us to feel ourselves in it from the inside instead of admiring it from the outside. It will be the first revolutionary novel of our time.

For a Biographer. Ever since July 4th, 1826, the greatest opportunity in American biography has been the life of Thomas Jefferson. Many people have tried to take advantage of it, and it still remains the greatest opportunity. For years the editor believed that, always excepting Jefferson, the finest remaining opportunity for the ambitious biographer was Bronson Alcott. Mr. Shepard has now taken advantage of it—how well the editor does not know now but will know in a few weeks. The runner-up therefore advances to first place: for Bronson Alcott, read Edwin M. Stanton.

For a Poet. The great opportunity for our poets just now is to write some poetry that somebody will like.

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Letters to the Editor: *William Saroyan on the Writers' Congress*

Reply to Mr. Farrell

SIR:—James T. Farrell's report on the creative activities of what we call proletarian writers since the first Writers' Congress, about two years ago, is misleadingly saddening in that he focuses attention only on the fact, which is ultimately probably insignificant, that the writers involved have done no writing in two years, and fails to remember that the main object of the Congress was to fight war and fascism, protect culture, teach people to read proletarian books, and enable writers to meet one another and talk.

I was in New York at the time and visited one of the meetings as well as three of the parties. The meeting was very boring although Granville Hicks spoke. The parties were like all parties that people with little money throw: very sad and without good liquor.

Mike Gold invited me to speak at one of the meetings and I had to tell him it was out of the question inasmuch as I was strictly an observer and wasn't that excited. The others didn't strike me as being observers, with the exception of Farrell himself and a young man (probably an unpublished writer) who'd sneaked into the meeting, and that's probably the reason the others didn't do any writing in the meantime and Farrell did. And the unpublished writer too perhaps.

What the proletarians *have* done in the meantime, however, may be for all I know, and for all Farrell knows, a lot more important than to have written a few miserable great books, and for all any of us know the last Congres was a great success because so far we don't know for sure if war and fascism haven't been fought, culture protected, people taught to read proletarian novels which haven't been written, let alone published, and so on.

I think it is very rude of Farrell to come around at a time like this, when spirits are high, and irritate and depress everybody by pointing out that proletarian writers haven't done any proletarian or other writing when their main ambition has been to fight stuff and organize. Solidarity is the thing. Comradeship. Gayety. Music. Life. To hell with art.

WILLIAM SAROYAN.

San Francisco, Cal.

News from China

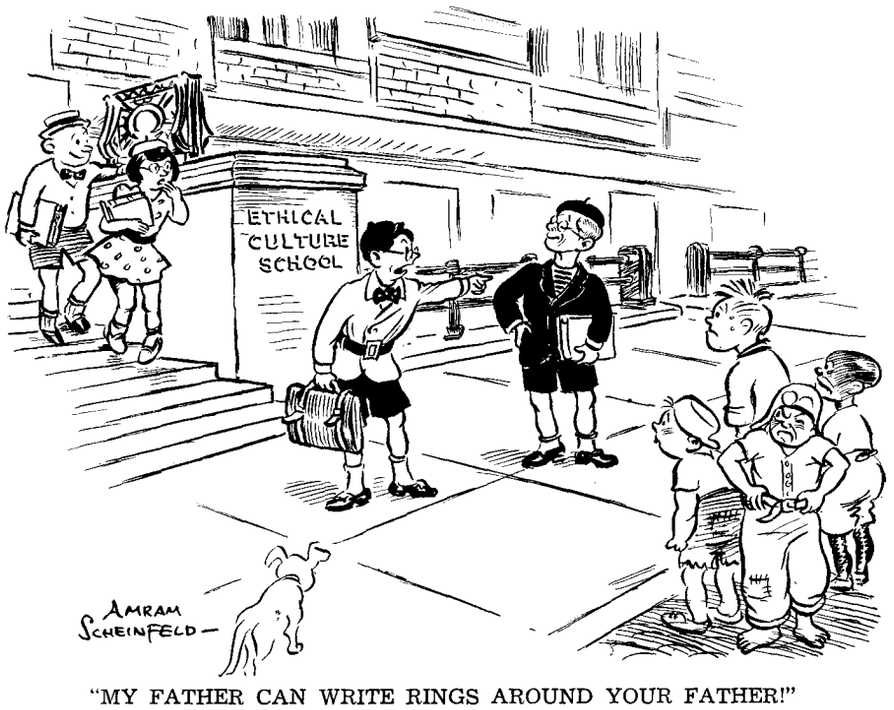
SIR:—I am enclosing two-year renewal of subscription for Mrs. Brown. I don't know how long I shall be able to continue to do this. I think you will be interested in an excerpt from Mrs. Brown's letter which she gave me permission to send you when she was here on furlough last November. In April, 1936, she wrote me:

"Such an interesting lot of people share that *Review* with me. I think you'd like them all. The first is a young missionary wife, an artistic soul who goes to the country to help nurse the sick. She passes it on to a youth at Central China College, just two years out of his college English, and struggling with the elements of English grammar for Chinese boys. He loves the glimpses of new books he gets through the *Review*. Then it goes to the American wife of the Swedish Consul, who eases the boredom of Hankow society by writing for a local paper. Next it goes to a girl who is librarian of the C. C. College and she deposits it, for final rest, in the college library. Could you think up a better list of uses for such a sheet? O, I forgot the Deaconess who reads it. She's white-haired, the only one besides me who is not really young, but she's sprightly in her mind, socialistic in her thought, and devoted to the funny parts at the back of the magazines! So we thank you, one and all."

In the face of such exhaustive use, I presume it would be better for me to give up my own subscription rather than this one!

AMY E. HAWKINSON.

Minneapolis, Minn.



"MY FATHER CAN WRITE RINGS AROUND YOUR FATHER!"

Better Half of Cooper

SIR:—In your capital leading paper, in the *Review* of May 29th, you made a reference, en passant, of no great import to you, but of odd pertinence to me.

You commended certain books for reading by your grandly proposed "committee of agreement" on the permanent value of W. D. Howells, . . . that it would be helpful if they should also read Huckleberry Finn, etc., etc., "and the better half of Cooper."

It is just that "better half of Cooper" which I am anxious to determine. I have made inquiries through other excellently serviceable sources of such information; but thus far without a word of reply or of assistance in my present problem.

That problem is to select from an old "complete works of Fenimore Cooper" such volumes as are still vital enough to warrant rebinding before turning them over to a family for younger readers.

My own memory of Cooper's novels is so confused with time, and so rebuked by change as to make me unwilling to depend upon my own choice.

I therefore appeal to you and to the readers of the *Review*.

JOHN BENNETT.

37 Legaré St.
Charleston, S. C.

Myrta Lockett Avary

SIR:—We are grateful for the information given by Aubrey Starke in his letter on Myrta Lockett Avary published in *The Saturday Review of Literature*, May 8. "Gone with the Wind" has stimulated interest in all phases of life in the South before and during the Civil War and as soon as Mr. Starke's letter appeared we noticed requests for Mrs. Avary's books. Readers quickly respond to this sharing of information through your columns.

MARGERY DOUD,
Chief, Readers' Advisory Service.
St. Louis Public Library,
St. Louis, Mo.

Gorgas

SIR:—I am working upon a book based upon incidents in the life of Dr. William Crawford Gorgas of yellow fever fame, and am anxious to get in touch with persons who knew or worked with him, especially medical and military associates and relatives.

ROBIN LAMPSON.

2314 Dwight Way,
Berkeley, Cal.

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CHARLES KINGSLEY

Muscular Christian

CHARLES KINGSLEY: 1819-1875. By Margaret Farrand Thorp. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1937. $3.

Reviewed by ALEXANDER COWIE

A PREACHER'S main business is to save men's souls, not their bodies. If he insists on working for the relief of man's estate, let him confine his efforts to such sociological palliatives as improved diet, recreation, and sanitation. With economic planning in a larger sense he must have nothing to do. This was a lesson that Charles Kingsley had to learn before he became the "typical" Victorian described in Margaret Farrand Thorp's "Charles Kingsley, 1819-1875." A Chartist and a Christian Socialist, Kingsley reached the extreme of his unorthodox utterance in 1851 when he cited Scripture to prove that "all systems of society which favor the accumulation of capital in a few hands . . . are contrary to the kingdom of God which Jesus proclaimed." Chided for this heresy, Kingsley did not at once recant, but he responded favorably to discipline. He continued to turn up mildly shocking ideas—why must women wear stays? why shouldn't a working man play cricket on Sunday?—but his soul was safely tethered to British conservatism. Science made no agnostic of him. And Kingsley had his reward: Victoria admired his novels, and she named Kingsley a Royal Chaplain.

Mrs. Thorp's book contains more biographical fact than Stanley E. Baldwin's "Charles Kingsley" (1934) and less elegy than the "Letters and Memories" (1877), edited by Kingsley's widow. Considerable new material, drawn in part from family papers, is unobtrusively woven into a concise, well-unified biographical narrative. Kingsley's life intersected the lives of so many other Victorians that in a relatively brief study Mrs. Thorp has sometimes had to content herself with labeling the crossroads. Nevertheless she has been a competent guide and a good companion on a road well worth taking.

The Mirror of a Revolutionist

THE LETTERS OF LENIN. Translated and Edited by Elizabeth Hill and Doris Mudie. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1937. $4.

Reviewed by SAMUEL H. CROSS

THE published letters of the great are supposed to combine historical documentation with personal anecdote. Yet for one so revered by those who accept his political and social philosophy, Lenin bared his personal life but little in his correspondence. His private emotions and tastes were completely overshadowed by his intellectual zeal. The 340 letters which Miss Hill and Miss Mudie have ably translated from his communications to his family and his party associates reflect, to be sure, his devotion to his mother, his sister, and the comrade in political conviction who later became his wife. But they are in still greater degree the expression of his mental processes and of his devotion to the cause in the service of which his life was spent. For if Bismarck wrote, "Patriæ in serviendo consumor," Lenin could have recorded with even more justifiable pride his unswerving devotion to the revolutionary ideal, and the essence of his greatness lies in his disciplined surrender to a dominant purpose.

The Spartan nature of this self-sacrifice is clarified by a few significant items in the correspondence. In the autumn of 1895, while Lenin, at the age of twenty-five, was a modest participant in the campaign for disseminating Marxist doctrine among Leningrad factory-workers, he complained that living expenses of 38 rubles ($18.00) and street-car fares of 68 cents per month were excessive. Soon after his arrest, something over a year later, he was already planning his monograph on the development of Russian capitalism. During his Siberian exile, his letters were one constant plea for both technical literature and "the classics of political economy and philosophy." His literary activity during these three years marked him as the coming leader of socialist thought and action.

The political correspondence in this collection of letters provides valuable source material for the student of party history and the formation of Lenin's group of tested aids. His resolute defense of socialist theory as he expounded it is, of course, a matter of record, and his unique displays of temper are directed only against those who distorted his principles or failed in their execution. In the dialectics of socialism, Lenin revealed all the persistence of a Byzantine theologian.

The section of Lenin's correspondence least plentifully represented in the present volume is his official communications during the period of Military Communism (1918-1921). Even so, however, the published items typify the manifold preoccupations of the President of the Council of People's Commissars. Exhortations to the national minorities, orders for troop movements, warnings against inertia, measures against official corruption, peremptory requests for accurate reports, occasional distortion of facts for propaganda purposes, and condemnations of bureaucratic inefficiency follow each other in rapid succession with telegraphic brevity. Nor was Lenin blind to the tragedy of a national revolution. In 1921, he confesses: "We are poor, starving, ruined beggars. A complete and real plan for us now would be a bureaucratic Utopia."

Even though the human touches in Lenin's letters are rare and isolated, his correspondence reviews the iron will and unflagging intellect which carried him to eminence.

Samuel H. Cross is a member of the department of Slavic Languages and Literature of Harvard University.

Inside America

IN THE AMERICAN JUNGLE, 1925-1936. By Waldo Frank. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by GORHAM MUNSON

THIS, the seventeenth published work of Waldo Frank, represents the lighter, more journalistic side of one of the very few Americans who aspire to the role of artist-redeemer. The difficulties of that role, as witness the career of Dostoievsky, cannot be exaggerated, and the judgment of success or failure in it calls for a type of psycho-criticism rarely practised. The questions that arose about D. H. Lawrence—did he write from inner necessity or from a "will" to create, did he create out of excess of vitality or was it only an imitation of vitality?—also arise about Waldo Frank, who in his new book decides that Lawrence "was always striving to organize himself in wholeness: and always failing, and always furious and exacerbated by his failures." "In the American Jungle" contains some of the most important criticism Frank has written—notably the chapters on Spengler and The Modern Distemper—but on the whole it is an incidental book and does not provide a good occasion for discussing the Dostoievskian task Frank has given himself.

The book is dominated by two images, the first, popularized in the early post-war years being the conception of America as "a fumbling giant child" or gawky adolescent among European nations, the second being America as a jungle in which the old forms of Europe rot and primitive stuffs of a future American culture are hunted, the theme of Frank's "The Re-Discovery of America." It will be noted that the images are critical rather than inspiring, and in general

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Frank belabors America and fills in the future with religious abstractions.

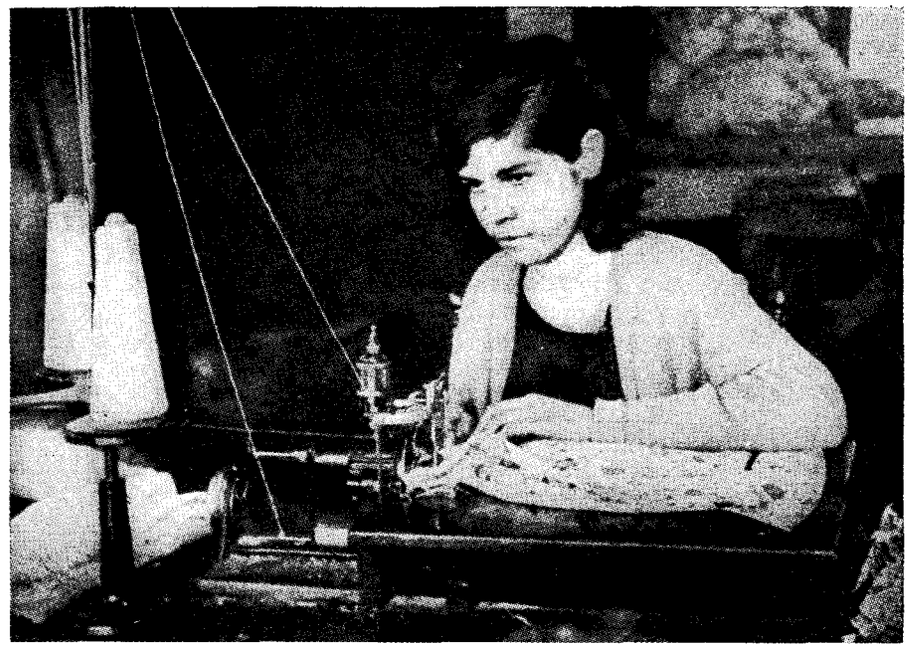
"Boom Year Sketches," the opening section culled mainly from the files of *The New Yorker*, is curiously enough Frank-cum-Washington-Irving. In these pieces Frank is gentle, whimsical, indulgent in subjective fancies, and a little ill at ease in the sketch-form. Somewhere in almost every one of them he grinds an axe, an annoying sound in the environment of a sketch, and in his depiction of the first Dempsey-Tunney fight he uses the word "ere" and refers to Tunney as the "Sweet Marine." Nor does it seem that Frank is much more successful in the causeries originally contributed to *The New Republic* and here grouped as a section on American Traits. Instead of easy writing, he achieves a softness of expression that robs the inevitable generalization on American life of the fruitful provocation it was intended to produce.

A good part of the book, however, is devoted to causeries on ideas, reviews of books, and portraits of persons, and the last is a genre in which Frank excels, particularly in the portraits of Chaplin, Croly, Freud, and Hart Crane.

The final section, "Some Practical Conclusions for the Survival of Man," is political in nature, with Frank frequently adopting a Rolland-like tone. Frank is explicitly an admirer of the Soviet Union and a subscriber to Marx's social teachings. Both positions seem to this reviewer inharmonious with our national genius which has led the way in solving the production problem and has a deep non-class sentiment, but fortunately Frank in his communism has abdicated neither mind nor spirit, and it may be predicted that he will continue to be a truth-searcher in economics and sociology.

It is for its nuggets of weighty thought and for the comprehensive sweep of its surveys that "In the American Jungle" should challenge attention.

WALDO FRANK



CHILDREN'S DRESSES BY THE PIECE. *Photo by National Child Labor Committee, from "The Roosevelt Year" (Funk & Wagnalls).*

Child Labor Today

CHILD WORKERS IN AMERICA. By Dorothy Douglas and Katharine Lumpkin. New York: Robert M. McBride & Co. 1937. $3.50.

Reviewed by RAYMOND G. FULLER

HERE is no dispassionate treatment of a sociological topic, for though the book is scholarly in manner and method, with careful documentation of its factual material, its tone shows considerable feeling. There is also an evident scorn that the American people should have tolerated so great an evil so long and deluded themselves—or allowed themselves to be deluded—into the comfortable belief that child labor in this country is now practically over. The authors likewise express their impatience with the sweet patience of many reformers and with the slowness of the slow processes of orthodox reform, with its dependence for support and success on the benevolence and enlightenment of the ruling economic classes.

Nor do they bother much about nice distinctions between what is child labor and what is not—or in other words, about the definition of child labor—apparently regarding efforts in this direction as lost motion and a failure to come to grips with the situation, which has to do with the place of child labor in the complex of our economic life. Therefore, in order to convince the reader of the seriousness and enormity of the situation, Miss Lumpkin and Mrs. Douglas rely on description of child labor in its varied forms, and enforce their statistics with numerous case stories. Statistically, they refer to the two and a quarter million boys and girls under eighteen working in industry and agriculture, but admit that one might choose to omit the million and a half who are sixteen and seventeen years old. They add, however, the tens of thousands, not counted in the United States Census, who work in street trades, homework industries, and agriculture and are under ten years of age.

The plague centers of child labor, the authors say, are Southern factories, the scattered areas of large commercial agriculture, the canning districts, certain industries in which sweatshops are rife, and the streets and tenements of large cities. Here they are particularly strong on description and case stories. In their uncompromising attitude, they refuse to soft-pedal the conditions and circumstances of child labor on the home farm, and devote a special chapter to the abuses of children who work for or with their parents under the farm labor, farm tenancy, share cropper, and migratory labor systems. They recognize that legal regulations are either non-existent or ineffective with regard to children working in agriculture, in domestic service, in street trades, in small family-run stores and shops, and that even in large commercial and industrial establishments the protection of law is uneven among the different states and the statutes riddled through and through with exceptions and exemptions, so that children of fourteen and fifteen or younger are still permitted to work in harmful and education-depriving occupations. They are skeptical of plans for linking "work experience" with education in schools; nevertheless, they say a favorable word about vocational training and guidance.

The book offers an economic interpretation of child labor and of the child-

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labor problem. "Primarily children are forced onto the labor market by the condition of poverty and the threat of economic insecurity which is the common, every-day experience of the American working class." The solution lies in an aggressive, courageous working-class movement which will give the workers their rights—farmers together with factory workers. While the authors favor the adoption of the proposed child-labor amendment of the constitution, in order to make possible the passage of a federal law prohibiting the labor of children in all occupations under sixteen (their book was written before the Wagner Act decisions of the Supreme Court and the renewed hope of valid child-labor legislation under the interstate commerce clause), they are convinced that only partial successes can be achieved within the competitive economic order. "No doubt sooner or later the labor movement will see, as a sector of it does today, that a solution of the all-round welfare of its children lies in a socialized economy, a system under which for the first time administrators will be free to subordinate all lesser considerations to the primary one of human welfare." This, in the same paragraph, is also called "socialism."

Mr. Fuller wrote the article on "Child Labor" in the "Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences."

Mitty and the Beldons

LIGHT WOMAN. By Zona Gale. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. 1937. $2.

Reviewed by Frances Woodward

ZONA GALE is pretty allegorical in this story, and her heroine, that "light woman" Mitty, is a sort of reverse Servant in the House. From her pent house, where she waters plants somebody else has grown, Mitty comes to Cataraugus County, where the Belden family pick grapes and apples from vines and trees they and their people before them have planted and worked. The Beldens have morals; Mitty has magnetism. The Beldens have roots; Mitty has pretty ways. It is notoriously difficult, even at a smart English house party, to pretend to be married to the son of the manor if you happen not to be. It is suicidal to try it in a comfortable farm house on the edge of a Western New York fruit village. At the end of twenty-four hours Mitty is converted by the Beldens, whom she has considerably lacerated in the interval. And the Beldens themselves are a little leavened by Mitty's light-minded amorality.

The story is bound to be good, from the very force of Miss Gale's ability to write. Nevertheless, the characters in "Light Woman" are symbols more than people, qualities more than humans. Grandma alone is as real as Miss Lulu Bett, and that is pretty real.

A Glowing Portrait of an Ancient People

DAUGHTER OF THE EAGLE. By Nexhmie Zaimi. New York: Ives Washburn. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by Louis Adamic

ALBANIA is an ancient country, peopled with a race whose instincts and ways of living are rooted in the dark soil of antiquity. Remote, largely unaffected by progress directed toward it by contemporary Europe, it has remained among the most backward of nations, greatly in need of education.

Nexhmie Zaimi's personal narrative stands out against the background of her nation like a brilliant thread running through the dimmed pattern of an old weave—for she is a symbol of the stirring of modernism among this isolated people. Her book is a picture of a country settled and comfortable in its darkness, at the same time as a portrayal of the ground

NEXHMIE ZAIMI

from which a new Albania has begun to emerge.

The daughter of an official selected by the government to manage the salt industry at Krip, a little town on the Adriatic coast, Miss Zaimi was a member of the Mohammedan aristocracy, exposed to its culture and traditions, and inherently aware of the Albanian temper, the meaning of its patriotism, and its passionate concept of freedom. Her country, the victim of Italian aggression in 1920, responded with a spirited resistance to the attempt upon it, its volunteers equipped for the most part with shotguns. The heroism of the little nation was not restricted to its menfolk. The author was only six when her mother, barricaded behind iron doors, a revolver clenched in her hand, defended her brood against the debauchery of drunken soldiers.

When the war was over, and the invaders repelled, men returned, "bringing back only their bones and souls," to the ravaged countryside. The indomitable and ancient instincts asserted themselves again. Albania was not to weep and mourn. "The man who dies for honor should not be mourned over."

Miss Zaimi gives a fine picture of the collective soul of the Albanian people, and what habits, customs, and traditions have endured through the centuries and gone into its making. It is readily discernible why King Zog's reforms (in a country where names like Singer Embroidery Machine and Chevrolet appear like incongruities) should be so suspect by his people, and his new laws accepted so reluctantly.

Miss Zaimi's autobiography—she is only twenty-two—is an appealing narrative. There is an exuberant vitality in her writing, lyricism tempered by keen observation of detail, and understanding of her people. Little proverbs run through her tale like a minor motif. The tender amenities of daughter and mother, the death of the latter, are eloquence not readily forgotten. There is a certain lack of deeper historical and economic background, but that notwithstanding, "Daughter of the Eagle" is a glowing portrait of an ancient people.

John Locke

(*Continued from page* 4)

obligation for the promoting of a stable human civilization:

> It is a duty we owe to God . . . to have our minds constantly disposed to entertain and receive truth whereso-ever we meet with it. . . . Our first and great duty then is to bring to our studies and to our inquiries after knowledge a mind covetous of truth. . . .

"Reason," the Candle of the Lord, as he so happily named it,

> must be our last judge and guide in everything. . . . If it shall be demanded then, *when* a man begins to have ideas, I think the true answer is,—when he first has any sensation. For, since there appear not to be any ideas in the mind before the senses have conveyed any to us, I conceive that ideas in the understanding are coeval with sensation.

Finally in a sentence charged with a sincerity simple and serious this modest philosopher summed up what he felt to have been his life's purpose:

> It is ambition enough to be employed as an under-laborer in cleaning the ground a little, and removing some of the rubbish that lies in the way of knowledge.

Llewelyn Powys, one of a group of writing brothers, now again makes his home in his native England. A recent book on Locke is "John Locke and English Literature of the Eighteenth Century," by Kenneth MacLean (New York: Yale University Press. 1936. $2.50.) *Mr. MacLean in a series of chapters traces in a useful and interesting manner the influence of Locke's cardinal ideas upon the great books of the eighteenth century.*

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The Bowling Green by Christopher Morley

Dialogue With a Wind

THE wind is uncertain, the wind is urgent: what way did you come, sweet Western wind?

High green galleries of the wood are loud and gusty with applause, my big tulip tree scatters its petals like peanut shells, the birds make whistle and catcall, the whole theatre rocks approval, then subsides in hush. The wind gives no answer.

Above, unseen, a plane groans over, keening in space like a sawmill, like a workshop for grinding stars; and now the pure wind seems veined with Time, with coming and going. Where you came from, summer wind, is it the same sharp Now?

What way did you come, O Western wind whose luck it was? Across sandhills of Indiana, clay meadows of Michigan? Littering elm seeds on the lawns at Ann Arbor, streaking with silver the plush fields of Pennsylvania, my very own? You spun dead papers outside the Public Library on Michigan Avenue; sucked from tall cresset chimneys at Gary their tawny rags of fire. You rustled the edged brow-grass of the dunes, and stung the cheek of the wild rosebud with grains of powdery sand. You pleated the sweet-water oceans with mimic offshore surf. Down the coal-smeared troughs of the Alleghanies to the land of white barns, green grazings, and the loved names of the Main Line (*Bird in Hand, Daylesford, Bryn Mawr, Haverford*). Or over the tilted vineyards of the Finger Lakes, the brown cliffs of Ramapo, toward the Empire State blinking sunset at the Hackensack Marshes. You drifted in the bright open doors of late bar-rooms; now you smell salt on the knuckles of a Long Island beach.

How can I remember, sitting alone with words, that everywhere it is Now? O wind of June, passing softly through so many Nows, hold them together for me.

Men in buildings, people in their desperate imperfect conversation, ignore or forget you; but you have speech with the silent, the uncovered. You *must* have: we need it so. I give you these seed-puffs to take with you as you go from somewhere to somewhere. I give you a word like a burnished beetle-wing found and lost; drop it where you may. I will not go back to an office until I have had talk with you, O wind; and assured myself that you carry laughter too: all the great comedies that purge and sting. Over this cabin, tree-rustle soars and sinks. It is not a belly-laugh, but 'twill serve. "Let us not forget the comic: with us, laughter is atomic."

What way did you come, sweet smiling wind? Past mills and chimneys, Tin Can Gardens, black soil turned over in a surf-curl from the plow, along endless blue parallels of rail? Did you come straight, or in waves and ripples like sand in a brook? Could I look over your crystal shoulder would I see your quick timely heels, twinkling out behind like the little soft hammers that strike piano wires? You were a dancing wind when you were young. But when one thinks too much, even Time and Space get mixed and everything becomes symbol. You yourself, becoming self-conscious, are darkening for rain. Out on Lake Michigan, as you remember, there are sand-hills that move, change shape and pattern under the push of weather. They call them Living Dunes; in those huge slopes no sparkling grain is fixed but still has tendency or secret leaning. Such, perhaps, are the heavy hills of Now. Remember me when you blow across them. At any rate, and before I put away Time for the night—

O nerve of thought, alert, aware,
That strips the moment naked-bare
And lives in double, Here and There—

That equals hunger with disgust,
Surrenders everything on trust
And begs for speech because it must—

A dune of living sand, ablaze,
Climbed in the utter noon of days
For body's cry and mind's amaze—

The silver needle through the skein,
The pain hidden within the pain.
The sickness whereof none complain.

Forecast for tomorrow: rain.

"Goodbye to Spring"

SIR: Like you I forget the facts of Spring until, year after year, they are forced upon me. I then enter them solemnly in a little book, carefully dated. (But it never occurs to me to consult last year's notes to guess at this year's possibilities.)

You did not say goodbye to Spring a moment too soon. On the farm today the orchard grass is above-the-knee tall, and plumy. Fireflies enliven the field beyond the springhouse. The first radishes—rather vague as to roundness, it's true—appeared on the supper table; and we are casting speculative eyes on the chickens that hatched when snow was on the ground; they are reaching fryer-hood. Summer is definitely here, in Maryland.

You have to have lived a year, as I have, on or near the equator, to know what Spring really is. I'll bet that when God finished making the world and rested on the seventh day, that day was probably May 15.

D. A. F.

Maryland.

SIR: Now I can keep this spring of 1937 thanks to your "Goodbye."

We had a guest in our country house once, who had to close the windows in the middle of the night on account of the insects with their "rustles, rubbings, chirps and oaths and screams." Perhaps he heard beyond our "surd" ears.

Social and Cultural Dynamics are not the only troublers in the world; something is askew with housewives' approach to spring. Moths are born to flit and we to apprehend in slapping pursuit; bureau drawers disgorge, and pockets, pockets,

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pockets have to be turned inside out right in the face of spring.

Thanks for giving me back the spring which I so nearly missed in Christian toil.

E. W. J.

Pennsylvania.

Peacocks and Trollopes

D. R. D. (Ann Arbor, Mich.) writes:—

I was so much astonished by some introductory remarks made impromptu by a speaker here lately, before beginning on his academic discourse, that I noted them down. (I am a professional stenotypist.) I wish you would print them. The occasion was the annual Hopwood Awards at the University of Michigan.

You may want to know what astonished me. It was that nobody laughed. However I thought they were funny. But should not speakers know better than to be humorous at such times?

[EDITOR'S NOTE. *They should. But if they knew better, they wouldn't be speakers.*]

"Once" (said this unidentified soliloquizer) "I was given a degree as Doctor of Letters. I'm afraid it was only an honorary degree, and as it was given by my own college it may have to be regarded as an instance of affectionate nepotism. The degree was accompanied by a beautiful scarlet hood, a regular Robin Hood. I am secretly as proud of it as ever was Mark Twain of his famous Oxford gown —of which he said, you remember, there's no such red outside the arteries of an archangel. But only once or twice in four years have I had an opportunity to wear it. I wrote hopefully to your chairman, asking if I should bring it along, but he replied austerely, No, just street attire. I was disappointed at first: I like to see an academic setting adorned with all its piebald splendors. I like to see the professors in what Tennyson called their skirts of circumstance; or was it skirts of happy chance? In their bona robas they always remind me of two of my favorite authors, Peacock and Trollope (Tony Trollope).

"But on subsequent meditation I was glad. One of the paradoxes of your Hopwood lectureship has been the rather highbrow discourses uttered in memory of a distinctly and unashamedly lowbrow writer. The author of *Fair and Warmer, The Demi-Virgin, The Girl in the Limousine, Why Men Leave Home, Ladies' Night in a Turkish Bath,* and *Getting Gertie's Garter,* would have been a bit puzzled by some of the cerebral reveries that have adorned his generous bequest. That spirited farceur's merriment lingered not around the brow but a little farther down; let us say around the knee. I feel sure that Gertie's stockings were not blue. I knew Mr. Hopwood a good many years ago, and I believe his acute sense of comedy would have been upset by the high specific gravity of some addresses delivered on this foundation.

"Do not for a moment imagine that I underrate seriousness, but it should come upon us unawares. Solemnity is a bad sign in a critic. The really great critics in our tongue—suppose I mention offhand Lamb, Coleridge, Hazlitt, De Quincey, a cautious list; or the king of them all in our own time, Professor Saintsbury—all had an adorable sense of fun. Solemnity was something they could take or leave alone."

By the kindness of Frank Monaghan we are able to print a photo of the site of the Communication Building of the 1939 World's Fair (on Long Island). This picture shows how it looked in the spring of 1937. The exhibit of Books and Publishing Crafts will be shown in that building; it should be interesting in 1939 to look back.

Two Traditions

CANDLE IN THE SUN. By Edith Roberts. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by THEODORE PURDY, JR.

THE considerable advantage of an initial situation both unusual and rich in implications is possessed by this first novel. An American college girl marries a handsome Spanish-American in a moment of romantic enthusiasm. His father is the political *cacique* of a West Indian island which is nameless in the story, but cannot be many miles from Puerto Rico. The early sections of the book deal entertainingly with Avery's adjustment to her new life and surroundings. The Colón family is both numerous and powerful, their tradition determinedly Spanish, their opposition to all things American instinctive. It is doubly difficult for the girl to establish herself in this strange world because the American Governor of the moment has become unpopular. Avery's conflict with her new relatives is well treated by the author, and provides an illuminating commentary on why many American attempts at rapprochement with what used to be called our Colonial Dependencies have failed.

Later, dealing with Avery's relations with her husband, the author's touch seems less sure, and the quality of the narrative scarcely rises above that of the ordinary magazine story of the tropics. A long series of compromises is forced upon the heroine, who joins the Catholic Church without belief in its tenets, and, refusing to leave her unfaithful husband, yet carries on an affair with the American she has come to love. All this tends to make her a weak figure. Her gradual acceptance of the island situation also has its depressing side, though it is made largely for the sake of her children. Unavoidably, Miss Roberts is forced to conclude with the old saw about diametrically opposed points of the compass never meeting. Her book is moderately successful but not distinguished.

Whitewashing Wilde at Harris's Expense

BERNARD SHAW, FRANK HARRIS AND OSCAR WILDE. By Robert Harborough Sherard. New York: Greystone Press. 1937. $3.50.

Reviewed by FRANK SCULLY

SOME day somebody is going to write something deliberately dull about Bernard Shaw, Frank Harris, and Oscar Wilde, and it will then occur to publishers and readers that the subject of this astonishing Victorian trinity is at last washed up. At present writing, though, it's still an exciting literary item, as witness this book.

Robert Sherard's effort is full of fine frenzy, most of it marshalled to prove that Frank Harris was a scoundrel who vulgarized Wilde for whatever it would bring and came to an end far too peaceful for his deserts.

Harris's "Oscar Wilde, His Life and Confessions" was good, Sherard contends, only in those passages which were filched from Sherard's three volumes on Wilde. The rest was an elaborate fraud, bogged down with "confessions" which never took place and publishable only in such countries as have libel laws on a level with Little America's. That Shaw should have been bamboozled into giving the Harris biography of Wilde his approval merely moves Sherard to even further frenzy.

Hugh Kingsmill in a very excellent postscript tells of going to see Shaw in the hope of getting him to admit he was something of a sap for believing Harris's bilge water was a *vin supérieur* and failing to lure the Master down from his original high horse. Shaw couldn't see what good would come from raking up Wilde's vaguely remembered disgraces for the sake of throwing another handful of soot at Harris. Soot, he contended, wouldn't whitewash Wilde.

Sherard, no schoolboy himself, does an astonishingly thorough job of whitewashing Wilde. He documents his brief and pretty well proves that (a) Harris was a tireless liar, but a bad one, that (b) Shaw was a good blurb-writer, but a bad observer, and (c) the public is peopled with more suckers than Barnum's accountants ever made it out to be.

He argues astutely in an effort to prove that Harris wrote his book on Wilde to square a long-time grudge. Wilde's quip that Harris was received in all the best houses once left Harris, Sherard contends, burning with a slow blue flame for thirty years. In the end Harris paid off Wilde by damning him with far from faint brays—and making it all sound like Milton's lament for Lycidas.

Though I myself knew Shaw and Harris well enough to have written a life of one in the name of the other, Wilde was, as the

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saying quaintly goes, before my time, and will be, I'm glad to add, after it.

That he wasn't as good or as bad as painted hardly matters. In the showman's credo there's no such thing as a good notice, or a bad notice, except no notice at all—and Wilde has hardly suffered from under-publicity—which means that anything written about him is alive. Sherard's biography belongs in that category.

Questions on the Spot

I SEARCH FOR TRUTH IN RUSSIA. By Sir Walter Citrine. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1937. $3.

Reviewed by VERA MICHELES DEAN

WHEN Sir Walter Citrine, General Secretary of the British Trade Union Congress, visited the U.S.S.R. in 1935 at the invitation of Soviet trade unions, he insisted on seeing things for himself, and probably harassed his Soviet guides by questioning their official facts and figures. When shepherded through model housing developments, he would not rest content until he had visited unsightly slums. When led to the counters of Soviet shops, he persisted in comparing the prices of their shoddy wares with those of similar goods in England. His impressions, recorded in a somewhat long-winded diary, are by no means roseate. The Soviet Union, he admits, has made great strides since the war, especially when compared with the countries of Eastern Europe. It has achieved striking progress in its struggle with illiteracy, prostitution, and unemployment; has provided educational, cultural, and medical facilities formerly unknown to the masses; has increased the output of food and clothing. At the same time he believes that real wages are low and prices excessively high; that production, which has revealed considerable waste and inefficiency, is as yet far from meeting the needs of the population; that housing is woefully inadequate; that social distinctions are rapidly developing in a theoretically classless society; and that the dictatorship shows no signs of relaxing its hold on the country.

What particularly disturbs Sir Walter is the position of Soviet trade unions which, in his opinion, are nothing but organs of the state, far more intent on carrying out the orders of the communist party than in protecting the interests of the workers. Everywhere he found practices denounced by Western socialism—piece-work, the speed-up system, moral coercion of backward workers, women engaged in physically difficult and dangerous tasks. He seriously doubts the wisdom of close contact between British trade unions and those of the U.S.S.R., which might merely serve as a screen for communist penetration into the conservative strongholds of British labor.

What *is* this American dream?

"A peculiar dream, that the angels might laugh at, but that men and women were dying for, out in the West . . ." —*Page 86*

Perhaps the dream that sent Jean Francis Thrall racing his Clipper-brig to open up new islands in the South . . . that tore Joanna Wells out of a Puritan background to die a romantic death under the shadow of the Andes . . . that steeled the nerve of Mary Parker, as she watched her husband walk calmly out of her life . . . that made of John Thrall a pioneer editor, fighting for tolerance in the rough-and-tumble West . . that inspired his grandson, Shelby Thrall, with a new will to live . . .

Working contrary destinies —intangible but ever-present— whatever it is, this time-richened American dream comes alive with flaming new meaning in the powerful chronicle of three generations of the Thralls and of America.

AMERICAN DREAM

A NOVEL BY

MICHAEL FOSTER

Literary Guild Selection for July

$3.00...*and published by* MORROW

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The PHŒNIX NEST

CONTEMPORARY POETRY: BY WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

FIRST a few notes on certain events and books connected with poetry. I am glad to see that his two books of poems, "Black Man's Verse" and "I Am the American Negro," won for *Frank Marshall Davis* a $1,500 Julius Rosenwald Fund Fellowship for "creative writing, especially poetry." Both books were published by the Black Cat Press in Chicago, the first appearing in September, 1935. At that time I noticed Mr. Davis's work in these columns and said that I regarded him as the most promising Negro poet of recent years. He comes from Kansas, has just turned thirty, and is at present feature editor of the Associated Negro Press in Chicago . . . In Nashville, Tennessee, on June 10th, a complimentary dinner was given to *John Crowe Ransom*, "for long and distinguished service to literature." The toastmaster was *Ford Madox Ford*. Sponsors of this event were *The Saturday Review of Literature*, *The Southern Review*, *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, and *The Sewanee Review* . . . "A Bibliography of the Writings and Criticisms of Edwin Arlington Robinson," by *Lillian Lippincott*, has been published in the "Useful Reference Series No. 59" by the F. W. Faxon Company of Boston. In this connection we can recommend *Rollo Walter Brown's* short book called "Next Door to a Poet: A Friendly Glimpse of Edwin Arlington Robinson" (Macmillan. $1.50). Its frontispiece is a very good drawing of Mr. Robinson by *Dwight C. Sturges* . . . For lovers of the great French symbolist, *Stephane Mallarmé*, "Poems," translated by *Roger Fry*, with commentaries by *Charles Mauron* (New York: Oxford University Press. $3), is the best recent explanatory text, with the authoritative original facing the translation, page by page. Roger Fry, the famous English critic and painter, made his translation a meticulous lifework . . . Essays that constitute a new study of the American poet, *Robinson Jeffers*, make up *Rudolph Gilbert's* "Shine, Perishing Republic" (Boston: Bruce Humphries, Inc. $2.50). In the front matter is a holograph reproduction of pages of a letter from Jeffers explaining his most significant lines, the kernel of his philosophy . . . In "The Pageant of Man," Mr. *Stanton A. Coblentz* has attempted a most ambitious work, no less than "the epic of man's present and future" (The Wings Press, 939 Woodycrest Avenue, New York City. $2.50). His reach exceeds his grasp by a good deal, and he has not evolved a distinctive style of his own.

R. P. Blackmur is already known as a critic. The first collection of his poems is "From Jordan's Delight" (New York: Arrow Editions. $2). Some of these poems have appeared in such magazines as *Poetry*, *The American Mercury*, *Hound and Horn*, and *The New Republic*. Jabberwocky has bemused him a bit. Viz:

There comes the day's calthumpian, all afleer,
In his midwaste quotidian King Lear.

This is just incredibly bad writing! *Hart Crane* often wrote that way, and was lauded to the skies. Sometimes I think we need a second *Ben Jonson*, in these days, to bellow "Bosh!" at this kind of versifying. Mr. Blackmur is being nonsensical quite consciously, but I don't see that that helps matters. Needless to say he can also write well, sometimes very well. The "Sea-Island Miscellany" is both lyrical, original, and full of the sight, sound, and taste of the sea. "An Elegy for Five" is an arresting poem. "October Frost," also, is excellent. The answer to Drayton, and the "Simulacrum Deae," are remarkable poems about love, and there are good things in "A Labyrinth of Being." There is pity in this man, and revolt, and mature thinking. He has an imperfect ear for accent, a way of piling up monosyllables, and some times a jarring and uncouth use of words. But there is also undeniable distinction to his mind.

James Still, author of "Hounds on the Mountain" (Viking Press. $2), will be familiar to readers of *The Saturday Review of Literature*, since in the past we have printed several of his poems. I have said elsewhere that he can "blend homespun life and eternal beauty." He writes of his own Kentucky hills, of a "mountain dulcimer," of a fox hunt, of swapping horses on Troublesome Creek, of a court day and a mountain coal town. It is all very simple and direct, but also natural and authentic. But that is not to be taken as meaning that it is not the language of poetry as distinguished from the language of prose. It is, in fact, the sure speech of poetry—without the tortured quality that somewhat infects Mr. Blackmur's work. Yet there is in it certainly no flinching from reality.

Here were red feet of pigeons spilling
Like blood through the trees, breaking the forest down
In their dense roosting wild with guttural cooing.
Here in this weight of wings were folded death and dust.

Winfield Townley Scott won the Guarantors' Award from *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*. His "Biography for Traman" (Covici-Friede. $2) is a sequence of poems about a group of young men in their middle twenties. Certain passages inevitably recall Robinson and Conrad Aiken. But there is plenty of originality too. Certainly "Professor Black's Baby Elephant" could no farther go! Two of the poems, "Ignorant Armies" and "Nightmare," I read earlier when they first appeared, not in his book. They impressed me then, and impress me still, as quite remarkable. Mr. Scott is not always lyrical but he is already a thoroughly interesting poet.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE RADIO STUDIO MURDER *Carolyn Wells* (Lippincott: $2.)	Explorer slain by *curare* at mike. Wife suspected and another deadly dart speeds to mark ere Fleming Stone points finger.	Adept author gives different twist to very old stuff with plentiful red herrings, some incredibly naive passages, and plausible finish.	Standard Brand
THE LAST TRUMPET *Todd Downing* (Crime Club: $2.)	Death of Mexican matador and strange goings on in private hospital drag H. Rennert from retirement to copious action.	Murderous aftermath of fatal train wreck involves suspects galore on both sides Tex-Mex border and ends in enjoyable if slightly dubious solution.	Good
A MINOR OPERATION *J. J. Connington* (Little, Brown: $2.)	Wife of just-released jail bird vanishes. Ex-convict murdered. Sir Clinton Driffield's knowledge of "stinks" clears up case.	Less action than other Driffield tales, but intricately plotted, with acute deducing and neat bit of scientific sleuthing at end.	Medium
MURDER AT LEISURE *J. G. Edwards, M.D.* (Crime Club: $2.)	Insulin, infidelity, intoxicants, and ice-pick allied in several killings, solved, mainly, by doctor-suspect's frantic but clever young wife.	Limitless libations and tangled love-lives of invincibly unpleasant socialites get in hair of story—but some readers like that.	*Chacun son gout*
MURDER IN G-SHARP *Kurt Steel* (Bobbs-Merrill: $2.)	Young millionaire garroted with piano wire. Playwright suspected but Hank Hyer clears him and picks proper perpetrator for ten grand.	For all its lurid descents into odd dives, voodoo overtones, crisply reminiscent patter, and abnormally observant detecting, it's slightly phony.	Tol'able

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Economics à la Carte

PLANNED SOCIETY: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow. A Symposium by thirty-five Economists, Sociologists, and Statesmen. Edited by Findlay Mackenzie. New York: Prentice-Hall. 1937. $5.

Reviewed by CRANE BRINTON

PLANNING gets off to a bad start with this book. Its thousand pages are printed on heavy, glossy paper of the kind our textbook manufacturers favor, its binding is solid and thick, and its whole appearance likely to discourage even the students enrolled in Sociology 308a. Nor do its contents have the neatness and finalty we like to associate with so pleasant a word as planning. The book is formally a symposium, but its parts are so disparate, and strung together on such liberal, if not anarchistic principles, that the reader feels himself at times in a kind of intellectual Donnybrook Fair. Mussolini bellows out the gospel of Fascism as the supreme syncretic faith left us by the wayward nineteenth century, Mr. Sidney Hook croons gentle Trotskyite truths, Mr. Lewis Mumford bays the moon in a brief foreword, Mr. Jules Backmann condemns any and all attempts by governments at price-fixing with a finality in the best tradition of classical economists, and Mr. Henry C. Simons insists that real planning means real *laissez-faire*.

Mr. Findlay Mackenzie, the editor, has clearly made a conscientious attempt to bring before his readers a great variety of attitudes towards special and general problems of planning in human relations. There is a historical section in which Dr. Margaret Mead, Dr. Sterling Tracy, and Father Bernard W. Dempsey give very able outlines of the place of social and governmental control of man's economic activities in primitive societies, in the ancient Levant and Mediterranean, and in medieval Europe. In another section Messrs. E. A. G. Johnson, Wesley Mitchell, and C. J. Ratzlaff review the extent of control over economic life exercised by the state in early modern times and in the nineteenth century. A great variety of writers, mostly economists, then take up special phases of planning today—land use, industrial relations, public utilities, price-fixing, credit-control, taxation, consumption. On the whole, the writers in this section, though they certainly do not defend Herbert Spencer's "Social Statics," are clearly a bit skeptical about whole-hog planning in their own fields. In a final section, "The Control and Planning of all Economic Activity," writers like Messrs. E. C. Lindeman, H. D. Lasswell, Sidney Hook, Edward Heimann, and Joseph Stalin are more optimistic about the possibility of planning. Apparently the fact that "Planning Today" is pretty well impossible makes "Planning Tomorrow" in some way more likely.

Many of the contributions were by no means especially designed for this book. Mr. Mackenzie has taken his material where he could find it. The "Report of the Great Plains Drought Area Committee"—a very interesting document—is printed under "Land Use." Mussolini appears through a translation of his article on Fascism in the "Enciclopedia Italiana," Stalin in a government report of February 10, 1934. A clever teacher could use this material to indoctrinate his pupils with communism—or with economic royalism. Mr. Mackenzie, with what some of his colleagues must regard as a shockingly old-fashioned liberal bias, has spread out for his readers an *à la carte* menu. There are certainly hints—if only from the choice of Mr. Mumford as a prefacer—that Mr. Hook's pastry is to be considered more nourishing than Mr. Backmann's sauce. And one is pretty sure that the book will be used, both in the academic world and out, by the hopeful, improving, credulous, and indispensable people in this country who call themselves Liberals or Leftists.

They will not acquire from this symposium any very exact definition of the fashionable word "planning." Dr. Harry D. Gideonse in a very interesting passage points out how even in economics the word has no precision, that the tariff is as much planning as the T. V. A., that the line between a managed and an automatic currency is as hard to draw in this country as in Russia. But in a vague and very useful sense, we do know pretty well what Leftists mean by planning. They mean that administrators—boards or individuals—can go at social and economic problems in the way architects or engineers go at their problems, with blueprints. Though no doubt a modest amount of this sort of planning, aimed at the very immediate future, is possible with administrators and administrated as we now have them, the limits of such planning are far below the hopes of many writers in this symposium.

You cannot in a democracy plan as these people want to plan. You might plan Highway U. S. No. 1 without hot-doggeries, clammeries, Bar-B-Ques, dance halls, and the like, but clearly these unlovely institutions are there now because most people want them there, or at any rate don't mind them. Education? Well, we are celebrating a hundred years of Horace Mann right now. Again, and more fundamentally, the social sciences can't at present begin to do for the administrator what the natural sciences can do for the engineer. What little successful planning is done in the field of human relations is done by professional politicians, executives, priests, labor leaders, men in short who have been apprenticed in the old art of handling their fellows. That art is not yet reducible to abstract principles, to engineering formulas. And it is very much limited by certain resistances in its materials. Successful planners don't attempt to make men and women very much better in any abstract ethical sense. In the long run, even religious ecstasy seems to leave John Jones still John Jones. Messrs. Mumford, Hook, and their colleagues simply refuse to admit this. They continue to make John over—on paper—in their own pious image.

Crane Brinton is associate professor of history at Harvard.

ORNAMENT OF HONOUR

By E. H. R. Altounyan

$2.75

This remarkable poem is addressed to T.E. Lawrence; it was written within six months of his death by one who had known him for some years. *"The poem"*, writes Altounyan, *"was designed as a memorial embodying what I believe to be our common philosophy of life".*

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Our Library Buys a Book

BY RUTH K. FORINASH

The convention of the American Library Association, which takes place next week in New York City, makes timely the publication of this article by a prominent Kansas librarian. While it is written for the general public rather than for other librarians, and while it concerns the practice of a library in a small community, it epitomizes some of the central problems of all public libraries, particularly those dealing with the selection of books.—The Editors.

WHEN our library buys a book, some member of the book committee of the board reads it, and gives verbal approval to the president before it can be placed on the shelves. In case of a controversial volume, or one of doubtful virtue, all members of the committee, sometimes of the entire board, read it, and discuss the matter pending their decision. They take their responsibility seriously, for upon their shoulders rests the entire choice of reading material for a town of two thousand people, and for much of the surrounding farm territory.

While our town is not geographically isolated, it is remote from intellectual centers, and unconcerned about the matter. That the nearest shop where one can purchase a volume of biography or poetry is fifty-two miles distant bothers most of us not at all; that one must travel half that far to secure the most frivolous of late novels concerns us little more; only when there is a September dearth of fourth grade geographies is any protest made; yet we read, and we take our reading seriously.

We subscribe to magazines in order to keep up with current affairs; and we take books out of the library at the rate of twelve hundred a month; but we have so neglected an interest in library finances that the municipal appropriation leaves only about $150.00 annually to be expended for books, periodicals, replacements, and repairs. About $115.00 of this sum goes for new books. And with this money, wholly inadequate for many an individual's book needs, the library board must satisfy as nearly as possible the demands of all classes and ages of people, infant, adolescent, and adult.

Fortunately we are a homogeneous group; except for a colony of Czecho-Slovakians, most of whom have now lived three generations in this country, we have been American citizens since Kansas became a state. Our pioneer lives, the general trends of our experience, have been alike. To have an annual income of $7,500 is to be rich; to have less than $750 is to be poor; the range between varies from sufficient to comfortable. This eliminates the demand for foreign books. Our children all attend a standardized public school, whose library obligingly furnishes its own reference works; and except for an unabridged dictionary and the customary encyclopedias, little money need be spent upon non-fiction.

Upon the book committee rests the dual responsibility of deciding what fiction to buy, and estimating as exactly as possible what sort of non-fiction may be read. Concerning the tastes of their adult patrons they are cynical; toward children, who do not yet know what they want, and who can be educated, they pursue a course of extreme idealism. It is not difficult to persuade a child that a natural history of rabbits may be as entertaining as Uncle Wiggily if the pictures are as vivid; and a bird book can be as entrancing as a fairy tale.

In consequence, the bird books are plentiful, the fairy tales and works of unimportant fiction a little neglected. Series books, which never lead one farther than a love of Edgar Wallace or Gene Stratton-Porter, are about ninety per cent taboo. No child can ever be sure that the library will purchase the next volume. Boy and girl scout books are regarded a little suspiciously, and cast aside unless their exploits are within the range of possibility. Career fiction for girls and airplane stories for boys find their place, but they never receive the welcome accorded volumes like "Jane Hope" and "Hitty," like "Skyward" and "We." And although the standard of books for children is steadily rising, the scarcity of good reading for girls exasperates the committee continually. Agents are not helpful, explaining that only series books for girls are being written. Boys won't look at them, but girls will read boys' books as readily as their brothers.

Chief in popularity among both sexes are Indian tales—a choice readily understood in a community where any pasture will yield some treasure of arrow or spearhead to the hunter—and Arctic explorations or Eskimo stories. In both types, the book committee sees to it that narrative and adventure spice a fairly sound knowledge of history and customs, so that some information is imparted even in the lightest reading. For students of high school age, disguise is cast wholly aside, and non-fiction of the type of "Behemoth" and "Digging in the Southwest," biography such as "Jean LaFitte" and "The Invincible Louisa," appears and finds plenty of readers. So excellent is this fare that a few adults, when they feel the need of reading something to make them feel they have not wasted time they might have spent mowing lawns or piecing quilts, patronize the juvenile section as the only place in the library where solids can be obtained. For toward adult patrons who know what they want, and who refuse "The Herd Boy of Hungary" if they call for "The Shepherd of the Hills," the board is cynical and conservative.

The attitudes have been imposed upon them by a community which insists upon reading tommyrot—decent, moral, respectable tommyrot—and which forces an unwilling committee to accept the duties of selection and censorship, and to accept the blame for shortcomings in either department. The now complacent explanation, "Of course, we read *all* the books that go on the shelves . . ." was once uttered defiantly and angrily, by a group who realized that they dared not waste a cent of library money if they expected to keep the place open at all.

They had to burn several books a dozen years ago. Nobody thought then of censorship, or measuring books with a yardstick of morality. When five or six of the regular patrons asked for a book, the library bought it for them. They bought "The Sheik." Some of the more conservative matrons took it out, and created a scandal, with talk of having the board removed, of sending a committee to the mayor, or taking drastic action to inhibit the circulation of obscene material by the library.

The librarian removed that book, and two other titles under fire, and concealed them until the board could take action. Hoping to compromise satisfactorily, the board instituted a "closed shelf," where such sensational books could be kept, and given to adults who whispered the request, for a twenty-five cent fee, instead of the nickel usually charged for new books during their first year in the library. But nobody asked for them, so the board regretfully burned the books, and knew that never again could they invest the public funds in such inflammable material.

So the book committee, regardless of personal preference, took a reading course in latest popular fiction, gradually compiling lists of standard authors—Zane Grey, B. M. Bower, Peter B. Kyne, and Curwood for men; Grace S. Richmond, Gene Stratton-Porter, Kathleen Norris, and Temple Bailey among women—whose books must be purchased, no matter what else was neglected, and who could be relied upon to produce good clean adventure or fresh young romance. But their books were never paid the compliment of being bought unread. "The Border Legion" was seriously questioned, and "Never the Twain Shall Meet," perhaps as much because it was foreign to the themes of "Cappy Ricks" and "The Valley of the Giants," as because of its racial implications, was banned.

Gradually, too, the members adopted fairly fixed standards upon which to base their rejections; rules necessarily flexible, and applied largely according to individual preferences. At first they classified as objectionable all books mentioning sex; later they were forced to modify it to its present basis: No book exploiting sex, or using for its theme unconventional sex relations between two people, is suitable for the library.

They buy no sordid books.

Books which are bloody, brutal, or horrible (mystery stories excepted) are banned.

A book of fiction must not be controversial, nor may it ridicule religion (this especially) or American institutions.

Humorous books are seldom purchased.

These rules cover the field of censorship. Of the restrictions imposed on economic grounds, perhaps only one is

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unique: the library seldom duplicates books which have been serialized in magazines for which it subscribes.

The application of these formulas which I (not they) have worded has naturally and purposely resulted in strict mediocrity. Obviously no list of best-sellers of the week or month could conform to its requirements. Best-sellers are books purchased for individual reading, precisely as a good deal of rental library popularity is derived from sexy stories whose ownership the readers would find it embarrassing to acknowledge. The first rule effectively takes care of this latter group, entirely to the satisfaction of both the intellectually discriminating and the moral elements of the community. It also permits the admission of good books with "purple patches," in which sex is incidental to the main theme—books as various as "Slim" and "Anthony Adverse," or "The Good Earth."

Unfortunately, it bars other books, equally good, and of no less significance. I can still remember the dismay with which my mother, at that time a member of the committee, read Willa Cather's portrait of "A Lost Lady," and the vigor she used in reporting unfavorably on a book —one written by a woman!—with a heroine of that kind. She sincerely felt that Miss Cather had betrayed her sex; yet she is one of the best-informed and most tolerant women in the vicinity, and her reaction was less than that of many patrons, who would have suffered an even greater shock had they been offered "An American Tragedy."

Dreiser, however, and a coterie of others—Faulkner, Stribling, Hemingway, Thomas Wolfe—are banned under nearly all the rules, even such as apply only to paragraphing and type faces. Generally no one bothers to read their work. Articles in the book-review supplement to which the president subscribes at personal expense, give sufficient insight for their condemnation. Should some of these, and nearly all other authors doing work today considered of importance, escape the first bar, they will almost certainly trip upon the second, for "sordid" may mean almost anything to us, applying indiscriminately to "Old Jules," who did not wash, but who is not yet rejected, to "Sanctuary," and to Ruth Suckow's "The Folks." To our public, however, any book in which the hero (we know no such equivocal term as "central character") fails to rise above his surroundings, overcome his obstacles, or defeat the weaknesses of his own character, and any book of futile or tragic philosophy, is sordid.

The third rule is most emphasized by the fiction to which it does not apply. A man, or a posse of men, may be left weltering in gore, and the book will not be bloody; a dead body may have been strangled in a manner fiendish and inhuman, and still not be brutal. So long as the grimness of death is drowned by the sound of galloping hoofs, and obscured by the question of who killed whom, the rule does not apply. Only when it brings conviction of reality, and leaves the reader shuddering with close and genuine emotion, only after such experiences as "All Quiet on the Western Front," is that decree enforced.

Even more strictly local in its application is the fourth rule, made especially to cover the problems of "Main Street" and "Elmer Gantry." We dislike being debunked, and the church is still an institution respected and revered among us. If we are to have books about our own neighborhood, we prefer "Trumpets West," and "A Lantern in Her Hand." Those things might have happened to any of our grandparents, and we enjoy and understand them; so far as Sinclair Lewis and his sort are concerned, we would ignore them anyhow, but we prefer not to have them about.

Just why we read few humorous books, and generally fail to find those few funny; whether we are lacking in wit, or take ourselves too seriously, no one could quite say. But the library board passes over works of genial satire and downright burlesque because nobody in town will bother with them. The last attempt, "The Private Life of Helen of Troy," was met with such a glacial "We are not amused," that "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" never even came up for consideration.

But in the last two years our public taste in books is changing somewhat, and for the better. Even though the library lags a little behind the procession, feeling that it cannot afford the expense of directing the change, the book committee rejoices, and experiments. They have had enough recent failures—"The Rise of American Civilization," which has stood on the shelf with all the staunchness of the little tin soldier, and "The Forty Days of Musa Dagh," which simply did not go out—to make them cautious. But "Anthony Adverse" violated all the canons, and has scarcely been in overnight. The same is true of "Gone with the Wind," which is so much in demand that the waiting list runs to next November 15. A bargain in one of Untermeyer's anthologies of poetry has had an almost unheard of success, and the demand for biography and realistic fiction is becoming marked.

Realism became most conspicuous at the school library, which was forced to purchase two copies of "All Quiet on the Western Front" to keep up with student needs. No one was more amused by this than the board, who had based their rejection of the book mainly on a conviction that it was too strong medicine for youth. They felt that their mistake indicated a wholesome symptom, for the board sees in these demands for better books an answer to the problem of censorship and a justification of their policy with the children. For the juveniles, nourished on good books, are growing up.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 168)

H. L. MENCKEN—"IN DEFENCE OF WOMEN."

This shrewd perception of masculine bombast and make-believe, this acute understanding of man as the eternal tragic comedian, is at the bottom of that compassionate irony which passes under the name of the maternal instinct.

The Baldwin Myth

STANLEY BALDWIN: Man or Miracle? By Bechhofer Roberts. New York: Greenberg. 1937. $3.50.

Reviewed by T. C. MENDENHALL

MR. ROBERTS neither likes Stanley Baldwin as a man nor admires him as a politician. Most of this book is a play-by-play account of Baldwin's opportunist rise to political power in the chaotic twenties. The chronicle is hardly a pretty one when set down in black and white, and the pathway of the leader of the Unionist party is strewn with deserted colleagues, expedient bumblings, and ingenuous tours de force. As secretary to Lord Birkenhead (a relationship not without influence on the author's attitude), Mr. Roberts was in at the birth of the Baldwin myth.

Luck is seen as the key to the rise of Stanley Baldwin, in a last chapter which is quite the best in the book. It was chance that gave him the Baldwin fortune and the pocket borough of Bewdley; the fortune assured him the position of a simon-pure amateur in politics, and Bewdley prevented him from ever experiencing a close election or another defeat such as he suffered in his first campaign at Kidderminster. Luck was with him when he deserted Lloyd George and the Coalition in 1922, for with the Coalition tottering he could not fail to win. Bonar Law first stood by him in his American debt settlement and then conveniently retired from politics because of ill-health. Thus, illness, luck, and Lord Curzon's peerage hoisted Baldwin into the Premiership and the leadership of the Unionist party. From then on, with a genius for inconsistency or at best indecision on all major problems such as the Indian Reform, the League of Nations, and Protection, that is only equalled by his ability to shift the blame to a colleague or plead the injured, but dreadfully repentant innocent, Baldwin maintained his position as leader of the Tory party.

Yet the whole effect of this tale of

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Baldwin's rise to power is fatally marred by the author's too obvious antipathy to his subject. Every action is immediately searched for some selfish or ambitious motive; his wealth, which as the author generously admits Baldwin did his best to justify in his anonymous, war-time gift to the Treasury of £125,000, is thrown up in his teeth at every possible opportunity. Mr. Roberts has a disagreeable journalistic habit of labeling, sign posting, and virtually pointing little arrows at every conclusion which he wants drawn from the evidence presented.

Quite apart from an irritating style, Mr. Roberts's portrait of Baldwin fails to furnish any real explanation of his success. The sad chronicle of luck and bare-faced opportunism is there, but no explanation of why the myth endures.

The comforting portraits of the genial country-squire-in-politics and the continuous reappearance of the Pollyannish, self-depreciating platitudes in Baldwin's speeches—which merely annoy Mr. Roberts—probably furnish a better key to Baldwin's success in the country at large than all the detail of intrigues in high places. And from Mr. Roberts's book one can only guess at "honest Stan's" undoubted skill as a politician in controlling an unwieldy majority and remaining at the head of the Party organization.

Thus in an epilogue on the events of last December Mr. Roberts sees Baldwin as the cause of the abdication of King Edward VIII, yet he refuses either to consider that Baldwin's greatest sin was in forcing the King's hand or to admit the correctness of his hunch as to popular opinion on the matter.

The New Books

Fiction

KEY NEXT DOOR. By Mathilde Eiker. Doubleday, Doran. 1937. $2.

This novel begins auspiciously with a description of Mrs. Holden Satterfield's house hunting. On any Sunday she could manage, armed with ammunition provided by the real estate section of the Sunday papers, she dragged her husband and one or both of her children on wearing expeditions through suburban houses. She had no intention of really buying a house, but she did love looking over them and her methods with agents were complicated and adroit and make amusing reading.

It is a particular house hunt which starts the story moving. Taking refuge during a rainstorm in an empty house, under the pretext of examining it, Holden Satterfield, having dashed back to his car on an errand, mistakes the empty house for the one next door and in consequence meets Agnes Thomason, a writer of short stories. He falls in love with her almost at once and so does she with him. This love story is the book's theme. If there is no resolution, if the story seems merely to end on page 354, the author is at least perfectly right. Given her characters there was no resolution to their problem.

Mathilde Eiker is a real novelist. Her plot and motivation are alike logical and tidy. Her characterizations, particularly her women, are excellent. She has a genius, too, for domestic interiors. It is true that the theme of a husband hog-tied by domesticity and finding love too late has been done before and done plenty. But here it is well handled.

C. H. M.

TIME PIECE. By Naomi Jacob. Macmillan. 1937. $2.50.

The English family chronicle has developed into a pattern; and the long succession of novelists following Galsworthy have evidently exhausted its possibilities. There is nothing wrong with "Time Piece" except that it has too often been written before—by G. B. Stern, Storm Jameson, and Doris Leslie, to name three. The Victorian woman married to a gambler is a familiar figure in a trite situation; no less familiar is the daughter who makes the same mistake. In this case the daughter, Claudia, leaves her husband (who conveniently dies) and goes to live with his family; the Stern and Jameson motifs are combined in the fact that the family is Jewish and the fact that Claudia goes into their wine business and makes a success. The story progresses to an even lower level of originality when Claudia falls in love with a man who turns out to be the illegitimate son of her own father. Aside from this melodramatic episode, Miss Jacob handles her material more than competently; the story moves along; a sense of full-bodied life is conveyed; if you aren't tired of the chronicle pattern you will find this a readable sample of it.

G. S.

MERMAID TAVERN. By George W. Cronyn. Knight Publications. 1937. $2.50.

With Christopher Marlowe as his hero and the London and England of "Gloriana" as his background, Mr. Cronyn has highly dramatic and colorful material to deal with. It is the Elizabethan period of high adventure and discovery, not only in the voyages of the day but in the realm of the mind. "Kit" Marlowe is plunged into several plots, one to rescue Mary Queen of Scots from prison. He visits the Paris of that day and has an affair with a charming Parisian. In fact his feats with women remind one of D'Artagnan in "The Three Musketeers," only more so. Mr. Cronyn always writes on the lusty side, and he has had genuine pleasure describing Marlowe's wanton ways. The poet is here too. Cleverly sometimes it is suggested what particular incidents were the source of certain mighty lines. The poetry is quoted a bit too much, however, and the physical adventures of the book, while giving one an exciting evening, seem more novelish than true to the character of the poet as we know him. Still, there is no denying Mr. Cronyn's excellent research. The reviewer thoroughly enjoyed this book—a good, swashbuckling tale. We believe we know now how Marlowe actually died, but you will wish to read Mr. Cronyn's description. In this book, of

NEXT WEEK

ENGLISH '37

THE NOVELIST AND THE READER

ON the Editorial Page of next week's SATURDAY REVIEW you will start your summer course in the technique of modern fiction. By degrees Bernard DeVoto will unfold the answer to many pertinent and impertinent questions:

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course, you meet Raleigh, Shakespeare, Nash, Greene, and famous others. We admire Mr. Cronyn's details of city and countryside. He knows his Elizabethan England.

W. R. B.

DEEP SUMMER. By Gwen Bristow. Crowell. 1937. $2.

This first novel is the story of a Louisiana plantation, founded at the end of the eighteenth century by one Philip Larne, an adventurer from the Carolinas. On his way down the Mississippi in search of fortune he has met and married a prim lass from Connecticut, an admirable foil for his volatile nature. The greater part of Miss Bristow's book is devoted to their success story. An almost feudal enclave in the wilderness, their plantation remains untouched by political changes such as the American Revolution, and it is only at the end of the book that the Larnes find themselves citizens of the United States by purchase.

The author has chosen to treat this ample subject in conventional fashion, as a romantic saga of pioneer life. Many of the situations and characters are sentimentalized, while the graver problems, such as slavery and the hasty acquisition of wealth, are passed over with superficial competence. In plot and detail the book is unobjectionable, yet the picture of plantation life presented by it is as misty and indistinct as the heat-haze which obscures the Larnes' great house in deep summer.

T. P., JR.

SONG OF FRIENDSHIP. By Bernhard Kellermann. Bobbs-Merrill. 1937. $2.50.

Four less distinguished individuals than the four who came home with Hermann from the Front would be hard to find. "Mortal men, mortal men," like their host. When they got to their destination, they found the old man dead, the farm buildings just burnt down, and winter well set in. Faced with complete failure, they decline to consider the possibility, and get to work. And, like humanity itself, these German rapscallions get along well enough. Not one of the persons in this tale is one that any one would really care to know. They are all "low people," and as such would be in life somewhat forbidding, because their ways are so different from those of most of us. Nevertheless, they are completely fascinating in the story, and in their loyalty to one another, and their disregard of troubles, are a cheering lot to read about. A self-respecting lot, a vigorous lot, and a lot that knows no failure.

S. N.

Miscellaneous

KARL MARX, MAN AND FIGHTER. By Boris Nicolaevsky and Otto Maenchen-Helfen. Translated by Gwenda David and Eric Mosbacher. Lippincott. $3.50.

The authors of this book on Karl Marx have set out to do justice primarily to the man of action rather than to the man of ideas. They have succeeded in producing an eminently readable volume. Its interest, however, is due not so much to the narrative skill or historical insight of the authors but to the dramatic quality which inheres in the conflict of movements, principles, and personalities that were the defining coördinates of Marx's career. As an introduction to the study of Marx's life, this book is quite adequate.

But only as an introduction. For it overlooks the central fact that although Marx's activity is the key to his major ideas—and, indeed, crucial to certain disputed points—in the last analysis it is Marx's ideas and method of social analysis which are of first importance today. Any truly significant account of Marx, therefore, must stress those historical, economic, political, and philosophical theories which he developed in the course of a lifetime of revolutionary activity. It is these theories which the study of Messrs. Nicolaevsky and Maenchen-Helfen neglects. They are mentioned, to be sure, but neither the leading ideas of Marx nor those of the other great contending figures who were Marx's rivals receive systematic development. In a sense this is a self-imposed limitation upon the part of the authors but it is precisely the kind of limitation which is inappropriate where Marx is concerned.

S. H.

CATHEDRAL, A GOTHIC PILGRIMAGE. By Helen Huss Parkhurst. Houghton Mifflin. $4.

There can be no denying that Miss Parkhurst brings to her task an emotional responsiveness to medieval things which, because of its intensity, cannot fail to draw a warm response from many readers. However, she brings little more to the most important part of her subject, church architecture itself. To convey the effect on an observer of any work of art is a difficult thing which requires not only powers of expression, but deep penetration into the work itself and ability to analyze. Before the works of French architecture on which she bases her book the author is intellectually helpless. She fails to give any idea of the aims of the Romanesque and the Gothic styles and the means by which they were realized. A church is simply a collection of parts; there is no sense of the controlling logic which unites the parts into a whole. There is even no clear grasp of the parts themselves. The occasional flashes of insight which do occur here and there appear to be absolutely fortuitous.

Since there is no coherent comprehension of architectural works in themselves, it is not surprising that there is no approach at all to the problem of the relation of architectural forms to other cultural manifestations of the age. Nevertheless, the passages in the book which treat the poetry, theology, dogma, and liturgy of the Middle Ages and thus lay part of the basis for an attack on this problem are by far its best parts. Here the author seems at home; she is dealing with material with which she knows how to cope. It is a pity that these lucid and really valuable pages should be sandwiched between those which struggle in vain with architecture.

F. B. D.

Reviewing Reviews

MOST reviewers of Virginia Woolf's "The Years" caught on to the fact that the novel is concerned with the experience of time passing. They used much of their space describing this, with reference to the characters in the story; and the review folder is largely a collection of identical synopses, which would be pretty monotonous except that, as usual, there are disagreements about how good the book is.

The enthusiasts not unnaturally expressed themselves in literary terms, with a good deal of reference to style and technique. As Ralph Thompson said in the *N. Y. Times:* "Out of the 435 pages emerges one lasting impression only: that of a subtle and, at times, immensely successful technique. . . . Mrs. Woolf is nearest perfection when dealing with the past, or with a present that has already begun to lose itself in the past. Then she is near perfection indeed." And Herschel Brickell in the *N. Y. Post:* "So great is her mastery of what somebody once called her 'artfully artificial' method of story telling that I can never read her without feeling that she gets more out of this peculiar technique than there actually is in it." But he concludes: "I suspect it will be accepted as one of the finest things she has yet accomplished."

"Rich and lovely with the poetry of life," said Peter Monro Jack in the *Times Book Review;* ". . . lovely as 'The Waves' was, 'The Years' goes far behind and beyond it . . . expressing Mrs. Woolf's purpose in the novel more richly than it has ever been done before." "One of Mrs. Woolf's most brilliant achievements," said the *SRL,* "written with imagination that is luminous and evocative." "On the whole I think this is Virginia Woolf's finest novel," wrote Carl Van Doren in the *Boston Herald.*

There were favorable reviews throughout the country. "Far from being literary caviar," said the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette,* ". . . 'The Years' is a book of enormous potential appeal . . . Certain to linger on in the memory long after most of its contemporary rivals for your attention have been forgotten." "Few novels of our day will be read twenty-five years hence and seem as timeless and beautiful as this

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one," said the *Des Moines Register*. And the reviewer of *The Milwaukee Journal* threw his hat even higher: "We are not often breathless in hailing a book, but here is one which stands firm against the coldest, critical probing . . . done with a skill that comes very close to genius." So much for the favorable reviews, except to say that *Time's* critic must have liked it, though he never quite said so, since he gave it six columns.

Some said yes and no, for instance Lewis Gannett in the *N. Y. Herald Tribune:* "Such an anatomy of frustration is a high form of literature. But it is not satisfying"; and Clifton Fadiman in *The New Yorker:* "While I do not wish to go down in history as the boy who decried Woolf, candor forces me to add—may God and Bloomsbury forgive me—that, lovely as it is, 'The Years' is just the least mite dull."

Those opposed include a curious list of publications, from *The Atlantic Monthly* all the way to *The New Masses*. The latter magazine sums it up: "To judge from the lavish praise already heaped on 'The Years' in the bourgeois press, this kind of immersion in trivia is the hallmark of 'great art.'" "It seems more than ever unlikely," according to William Troy in *The Nation*, "that Mrs. Woolf's talents, which are considerable in so many different departments of fiction, will develop to their full measure while she persists in limiting herself to purely formal variations on the same old dirge-like tune." "By now it is obvious"—we quote Granville Hicks in *The New Republic*—"that 'life'—in almost any conceivable sense of the word—is just what is not in Virginia Woolf's novels."

Solid as are their phalanxes, it is not only the professional leftists who throw this cold water. *The Literary Digest* calls "The Years" "a completely meaningless story"; the *N. Y. American* and *Daily News* say it's spinach; Fanny Butcher in the *Chicago Tribune* was disappointed ("we are all going to be put to it, I fear, to find great distinction in 'The Years'"); so were the *El Paso Herald-Post* and *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*. The *Christian Science Monitor* proclaims: "One wonders why it was necessary to write a novel of 450 pages when the death blow to development on any plane was dealt in the first fifty by her method." And Theodore Spencer in *The Atlantic Monthly:* "The novelist's job is not only to convey a sense of evanescence; he must also create character solid enough to give us the illusion of permanence. This Mrs. Woolf has not done. And her inability to do so represents, I believe, the end of a movement in recent fiction."

So there you are. The favorable critics, except in Milwaukee and Pittsburgh, either say or imply that "The Years" is something pretty special, pretty esoteric. There are unfavorable critics representing every kind of intellectual background. The American Library Association *Booklist* called "The Years" "a novel rich in implications, in the mutations of character with the passing of time, but with slight appeal to the ordinary reader." And "The Years" has for several weeks led the best-seller lists; it is probably Virginia Woolf's most popular novel.

You tell us why.

PERSONALS

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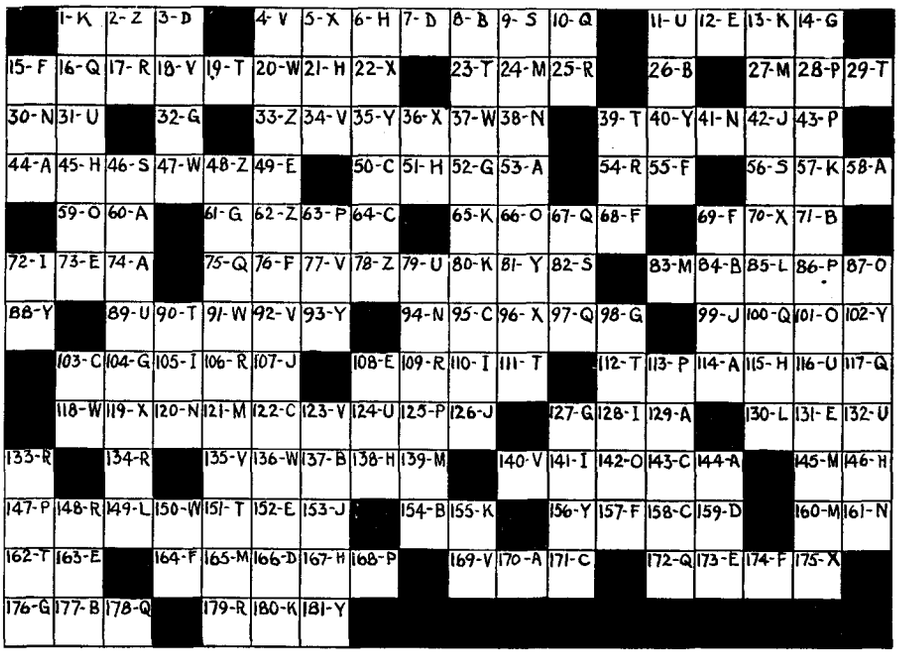
Double-Crostics: No. 169

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY



DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-six words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's International Dictionary.

The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 19 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Valueless portions of a lode (mining).

B. One of the 3 horses of the sun (Norse myth.).

C. Without a defect.

D. River in Belgium.

E. Causing oblivion.

F. Struggle for supremacy (comp.).

G. Fabled universal solvent of the alchemists.

H. A constituent part.

I. Egyptian goddess, like Athena.

J. A funeral dirge.

K. Dish of rice, meat, etc. (Ital.).

L. To be in debt.

M. Bibulous follower of Falstaff.

N. Slatternly.

O. First name of American woman novelist (1862—).

P. Short and pudgy (comp.).

Q. Disposition to follow.

R. Signature made for one person by another.

S. Atmospheric element.

T. Lack of mutual attraction.

U. Eight and a third per cent.

V. Member of South African people.

W. Author of "Ben Bolt."

X. Head of Ismaelian Mohammedans since 1885 (2 wds.).

Y. Abstracts.

Z. Member of a Scandinavian country.

WORDS

53 60 129 74 44 58 114 170 144

26 84 71 8 137 154 177

171 95 122 103 64 143 50 158

3 166 159 7

152 131 173 12 49 108 73 163

68 76 164 174 15 69 157 55

32 52 98 127 104 14 61 176

6 21 45 51 115 138 146 167

128 110 105 72 141

107 42 99 153 126

13 80 180 57 1 65 155

85 130 149

83 165 160 139 24 121 27 145

94 120 161 41 30 38

101 87 142 59 66

28 86 125 168 147 113 63 43

10 178 75 172 67 97 16 117 100

179 133 106 54 17 25 134 148 109

56 9 46 82

162 29 23 112 151 39 90 19 111

124 11 31 132 89 79 116

18 34 4 135 77 123 92 169 140

37 150 118 47 20 91 136

119 22 96 36 5 70 175

102 88 35 81 156 181 40 93

78 2 48 33 62

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Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

IN Chicago briefly, Old Q. had his first chance to admire that city as she shows herself in warm weather, with the Buckingham fountain spouting and the coughdrop-scented electric fan whirring in Kroch's bookstore. ☞Mr. Kroch was reported on his way home from the Orient where he has been hunting *netsukes* for his collection. ☞Burton Rascoe made a talk at Marshall Field's and signed many copies of *Before I Forget*. ☞At Carson Pirie's Old Q. had the pleasure of meeting that delightful person Kenneth Horan whose *Remember the Day* was selling briskly. Kenneth Horan—who is feminine, not masculine—writes the spirited book column in the Chicago *Journal of Commerce*. Her mother, she tells us, had the smallest waist in the State of Michigan; an inheritance that fills us with awe. ☞Speaking of beautiful people, Marcella Hahner, at Field's, has edited her lovely argentine coiffure with a delicate blue wash. This we admired: we like ladies to be experimental. ☞Another book they were speaking highly of at Carson Pirie's is *The Castle of Contentment* by Jaegermester Plov, a series of charming letters from a Jutland farm; translated from Danish by Astrid Sawyer and Llewellyn Jones. This is published by the Chicago house Willett Clark. ☞Carson Pirie's expect to do very well with a book announced by the same firm and written by their own (C. P.'s own) Max Siegel: *A Portrait of Barbara*, letters to a child from her father. This was begun by Mr. Siegel to tell his infant daughter about the things she would not be able to remember; Ralph Henry, his boss, insisted that the letters should be published and Willett Clark agreed.

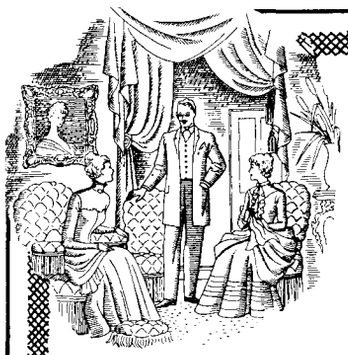
☞At the Doubleday Doran shop in Chicago we had a chat with the gracious Gunver Svensen, whose name we fear we often misspell, and Jack Stevens whom we first knew at Percy Beach's in Indianapolis. Ben Silbermann, who started the D. D. place on Michigan Avenue, has now gone back to Detroit. ☞When we saw Ben Abramson at the Argus Book Shop he was just leaving for Illinois Wesleyan to give a lecture on "The Influence of Books On People Who Don't Read Them."

☞While Old Pantechnicon was in the Middle West an energetic bacillus got him by the entrails, which involved a fluoroscopic examination, very exciting: wish some magic equally revealing could be introduced into book-criticism: and one of his simple pleasures was to note that the waiting room of the Presbyterian Hospital, Chicago, carries copies of *Punch*. ☞The Hopwood Room at the University of Michigan ditto the SATURDAY REVIEW. ☞We have brooded a good deal about a sign we saw along the North River waterfront when we were aboard the towboat *Alice M. Moran* a few weeks ago. We accompanied Mr. Hulbert Footner who was making final notes for his book about N. Y. City, for which he has a fine title: *New York—And How*. ☞The sign said:—

AVVISO
RACCUGLITORI DI STRACCLE
FERRA VACCHI NON SONO
PERMISSI

Our Italian is nil; we could only wonder what are Straggling Iron Cows? ☞Meant to say before, W. H. Auden's fine poem on Spain, published a few weeks ago in S. R. L., will be included in the new volume of his poems to be published (early autumn) by Random House. ☞We greatly enjoyed Auden's lyrics in Toller's *No More Peace*, finely produced by the Federal Theatre in Roslyn, L. I., under direction of Charles Hopkins.

☞One of the ablest college literary "projects" Old Q. has seen was a recent issue (April, 1937) of *Books in Review*, published by the Class in Critical Writing (Dr. A. B. Cunningham, instructor) at Texas Technological College, Lubbock, Texas. The editor was Margery Clevenger. ☞Able also the Harvard *Advocate's* number (June 12) parodying the *S. R. L.*—Good parody is a skittish job, some of the *Advocate's* stuff was burlicue rather than curlicue, sex-ray rather than X-ray, but we admit several enteric cackles.



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